

Herodotus Studies

Herodotus wrote one of the earliest surviving Greek histories of the then-known world. Born in 484 B.C. at Halicarnassus in Caria, Asia Minor, the author travelled extensively in parts of Europe, Western Asia, and Northern Africa. Known as the "Father of History" (and, alternately, as the "Father of Lies"), Herodotus produced a work that was and is extremely readable and enjoyable. The reliability of his information has been questioned, though a considerable amount of it has been confirmed by archaeological and other sources. The book also is an important early source for topics such as folklore, mythology, ethnography, which the scholarly studies below focus on.

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Herodotus as a Short-Story Writer

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HERODOTUS AS A SHORT-STORY WRITER

By ALFRED W. MILDEN
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"As a story-teller Herodotus stands without a peer, but his earnest purpose was to be more than a story-teller." With this judgment of Professor Capps, (Homer to Theocritus, p. 304), the present writer finds himself in complete accord, but he has restricted himself in this paper to viewing him in the lighter vein, using by way of illustration only a few of the beautiful stories that give relief to the more serious narrative.

The truth is that we have in this author a large number of shorter stories, of varying length, on a great variety of topics, enclosed within the compass of what is really a larger story closing with the destruction of Xerxes' bridge and the departure from Europe of the last of the surviving Persians. The moral that adorns the tale is also there, dramatically credited to no less a personage than Cyrus the Great: "Soft countries give birth to soft men. There is no region which produces very delightful fruits and at the same time men of warlike spirit."

It must be admitted, however, that not all the world is prepared to sing the praises of Herodotus as a writer of short stories. This was clearly apprehended by the writer but a few months ago when he began an independent study of the modern short-story, as it has been called, prior to an examination of Herodotus from this point of view. Reading with an open mind, he was surprised to learn that Herodotus, in common with writers of early Egyptian tales, had no proper conception of what a true short-story is, that when he attempted the rôle of a short-story writer he lacked originality in the themes he chose to present, that his treatment of his themes was marred by monotony, and that there was an absence of interest in his style. In palliation

for this surprising revelation, it was pointed out to the modern reader that prose was very late in developing among the Greeks, that poetry in its various forms had dominated the stage for hundreds of years with the result that it was too late for Greece to discover this new literary type. Of course the same fate befell the Romans, who in things literary were under the spell of Greece.

This startling revelation of the shortcomings of the Greeks in the domain of literary prose at once suggested to the writer the necessity of much reading of the modern short story to find out the peculiar excellences that mark this new development that he might use it in the future as a touchstone whereby he might discover for himself this lack hitherto unperceived in an author he had grown to admire, and whose very faults seemed to lean to virtue's side. He found it necessary, furthermore, to read some of the many books which lay down the principles that guide the true short-story writer of to-day. What he has gleaned, he might state succinctly as follows: Edgar Allan Poe, through his publication of *Berenice* in 1835, gave to the world the first thorough-going illustration of the technique of the modern short-story; he fixed attention on the *climax* of his story, making the reader see, feel, think of the "unique effect" of the story, and nothing else. Bret Harte in his stories of western life, likewise emphasized the *climax*, the heart of the situation. Thereafter the type was well established and favorably received in America, England, and France. Rudyard Kipling is the standard-bearer for his generation. The qualities that are indispensable to the short-story writer are masterly conciseness, originality, and ingenuity. He must possess the sense of form and the gift of style, and his story must have a point. Much more might be written to the same or a similar effect, but the root of the matter is here.

Aristotle is reported to have said on one occasion with reference to his beloved master: "Plato and truth are both dear to me, but it is a sacred duty to prefer truth." Now this ultra-modern conception of the short story, when carried over to the writers of an earlier time, who had entered the high realm of literature that knows no national boundaries, somehow seemed

to fall short when tested by the facts in the case. Accordingly it was with a feeling akin to relief that I read in the *North American Review* (February, 1917, p. 274 ff) an article by James Cooper Lawrence entitled "A Theory of the Short Story." I found that a goodly number of my own reflections had been anticipated. So far from being a distinctive product of the nineteenth century, the short story, says Mr. Lawrence, is the oldest form of literature, from which almost all the others have developed. Of course we must recognize the fact that during the past two centuries, and particularly in the past one hundred years, the short story has been transformed from a spoken to a written type of literature. The great public now reads for itself. It seems to me that there is a large measure of truth in the statement of Mr. Lawrence that Poe's rules for the short story applied only to one class of short stories, those told to produce a single effect, and that Poe's followers, in accepting his dictum, have treated one class of short stories as if they constituted the whole body of short-story literature. The wave of over-emphasis of the "effect" story has not yet spent itself. It should also be kept in mind that there are better tools of expression at the command of the average short-story writer of to-day than of the man who told tales a thousand or two thousand years ago.

It is true that Greek artistic prose was comparatively late in making its appearance in the field of literature, but every serious student of the origin and development of the varied forms of literary expression among the Greeks rejoices in the fact that poetry had the right of way for well nigh half a millennium in the world presided over by Ionia; and it is equally true that it was the "Father of History," who had himself reincarnated the glorious epic and lyric literature of the preceding centuries, who gave to the world in the graceful Ionic dialect of Greece, with the touch of a master musician, the first masterpiece of literary prose. Within two generations, in its Attic dress, this same speech had all but reached perfection in the hands of Isocrates, Plato, and Demosthenes.

But instead of trying to overthrow argument by means of

counter-argument, I propose to select a few of the many short stories with which the widely-traveled lecturer entertained his audiences in many places and endeavor to reproduce, as far as possible, their spirit and their form.

Arion, a native Lesbian poet, the foremost minstrel of his day, who is recognized as the inventor of the dithyramb, the choral hymn in Dionysus' honor out of which developed tragedy, flourished in the first quarter of the seventh century, B.C. Apart from his being a traveler and a friend of Periander, the well-known Corinthian tyrant, little is known of him except what we learn from the following story, first told in the pages of Herodotus, but elaborated and embellished by later hands (e.g., Lucian, *Dial.* Mar. 8; Ovid, *Fasti* 2, 91-116).

ARION AND THE DOLPHIN

The story goes that Arion, who had spent the largest part of his time at the court of Periander, conceived the idea of a voyage to the western world of Italy and Sicily to amass by his skill a large fortune and return once more to Corinth. So now he was starting back from the port of Tarentum, and with utmost trust in the honor of Corinthian men, had chartered a ship manned entirely by them. But when out on the open sea they conspired to throw Arion overboard and secure his fortune. Reading their minds, he made this plea that they take his money but spare his life. When this was of no avail, the crew gave him his choice of either making away with himself to be buried ashore or leaping into the sea with all possible speed. Driven to sheer desperation, he yet won this concession that with their approval he be allowed to stand on the high poop and sing in full minstrel attire, and when his song was ended he agreed to make away with himself. It gave added relish to their thoughts that they were going to listen to the finest singer in the world as they made their way from the stern amidships. Then arrayed in all his splendor of dress, lyre in hand, standing on the poop, he sang the lively Orthian strain, and as the closing notes died away, hurled himself into the sea, just as he was, minstrel garb and all. So they

sailed gaily away to Corinth, but as for Arion, a dolphin (so the story goes) took Arion on his back and carried him in safety to the port of Taenarum. There he landed and made his way in minstrel attire to Corinth, where he lost no time in reporting what had happened to him. But Periander, quite incredulous, put Arion in guard, allowing him no liberties whatever, while keeping a sharp lookout for the Corinthian crew; on their arrival in port they were duly summoned, and inquiry was made for information about Arion. After they had told that he was in good health somewhere in Italy, and that they had left him living in affluence at Tarentum, Arion suddenly confronted them, looking exactly as when he leaped into the sea. Startled from their composure, and accused of the crime, they could deny it no longer. This is the story the Corinthians and the Lesbians tell, and there is still standing at Taenarum the bronze memorial figure of Arion, not a large one, the figure of a man riding on a dolphin. (Hdt. 1, 24).

The idea of the dolphin charmed by the music of the minstrel is not unfamiliar in literature; likewise the part it plays of being the friend of man. The song of Arion is also an act of worship, and this religious element commends it further to the author. Is it too sudden a transition from the ancient to the modern world to say that this story is entertaining, that it possesses compact simplicity, that it has the dramatic essentials of plot and climax, and that it leaves a singleness of impression?

THE RING OF POLYCRATES

Of all the Greek tyrants none seems to have been more powerful than Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, whose rise to power, and tragic downfall, was most spectacular. From the year 535 B. C. until his crucifixion in 522 B.C. he was an outstanding figure and personality in the Aegean area. To have clearly grasped the value of sea-power for the maintenance of a Greek state was not the least of his merits. Amasis had endeavored to protect Egypt by organizing a league of maritime states; but the desertion of the island of Cyprus and the submission of Phoenicia to the Per-

sians had changed the balance of power. As a consequence Polycrates went over to the stronger side, and offered Cambyses a naval contingent when, in 525 B.C., he made his well-known invasion of Egypt. Polycrates' part in this breach of contract is ignored by the historian, who chooses to illustrate his favorite doctrine of the Nemesis attendant on good fortune. The story runs somewhat as follows:

Now while Cambyses was engaged in his expedition against Egypt, the Spartans also made an expedition against Samos and Aeaces' son, Polycrates, who had taken possession of Samos through a revolt. At first he had divided the city into three parts and shared his power with his brothers Pantagnotus and Syloson; but later he killed one of them, expelling the younger, Syloson, and so acquired possession of the whole of Samos. While in control he contracted a guest-friendship with Amasis the king of Egypt, sending him gifts and receiving from him others in return. Presently within a brief period the power of Polycrates began to grow, and it was heralded throughout Ionia and the rest of Greece; for everywhere he was minded to make an expedition, the outcome was always in his favor. Moreover he was the owner of a hundred fifty-oared galleys, and a thousand archers were at his command. With these he would plunder right and left, sparing none; for it was a favorite remark of his that he would gratify his friend more by restoring to him what he had taken than if he never took it at all. He had captured many of the islands, and many cities of the mainland besides; among his victims were the Lesbians, who had gone with their entire fighting strength to the assistance of the Milesians, only to be taken in a battle at sea, and were forced to dig, while working in chains, the entire trench that surrounds the Samian wall.

Somehow or other, the growing good fortune of Polycrates did not pass unnoticed by Amasis; on the contrary, it caused him no little concern. But when his prosperity increased by leaps and bounds, he wrote in a letter the following and despatched it to Samos: "Thus saith Amasis to Polycrates: — It is a pleasant thing indeed to hear that one who is a friend and guest is faring

well; but personally I am displeased at thy great successes, knowing as I do the jealousy of the godhead; and, somehow or other, I desire for myself and for the friends for whom I care success in part, and in part failure, and to spend my life in this manner with alternation of each, rather than to have unbroken success. For I have never yet heard tell of any one who succeeded in everything and did not ultimately reach an evil end, root and branch. Now therefore give heed to me, and in the matter of thy successes do as follows: give careful thought to the matter of which possession thou dost prize the most, and at the loss of which, thou wilt suffer the deepest mortification of soul, and get rid of it in such a way as that it will never be seen by human eyes again. If thereafter good fortune does not alternate with evil, then continue to seek a remedy in the way suggested by me."

Reading this communication, Polycrates realized that Amasis had made him a happy suggestion, and began to search for that one of his treasures the loss of which would depress his spirits most, and searching he made the following discovery. He had a signet-ring which he was in the habit of wearing, an emerald set in gold, the workmanship of Theodorus, son of Telecles, a Samian. The moment his mind was made up to fling it away, he did as follows. Manning a fifty-oared galley with oarsmen and embarking, he gave orders to put out to sea, and when he was a great distance from the island, he took off his signet-ring in the presence of all his companions on the ship and hurled it into the sea. This done, he sailed home, and arriving at his palace mourned his loss.

But the fifth or sixth day following he had this experience: A fisherman who had caught a large beautiful fish thought it ought to be presented to Polycrates as a gift; so he made his way to the gate of the palace and said that he wished to see Polycrates, and when his request was granted he said as he offered the fish: "O king, when I caught this fish, I did not think it right to carry it to market, although dependent on my own efforts for a living, but I thought it worthy of yourself and your empire. Permit me therefore to present it to you." Pleased with his happy

speech, the monarch replied: "It was exceedingly good of you, and I am doubly in your debt. I invite you also to dinner with me."

Greatly elated over this honor, the fisherman returned to his home; but as for the fish, the servants cutting it open found lodged in its belly Polycrates' signet-ring. The moment they set eyes on it and recovered it, they carried it in great glee to Polycrates, and as they handed the ring to him they told him how it came to be found. Impressed with the miraculous character of the occurrence, he wrote the whole story in a letter, both what he had done and what had happened to him, and when it was written he dispatched it to Egypt.

No sooner had Amasis read the letter that came from Polycrates than he perceived that it is impossible for a man to extricate his fellow-man from the fate that is in store for him, and that Polycrates was marked out for no good end because of his invariable prosperity, — a man who actually finds what he throws away. So he sent a herald to him at Samos and told him that their guest-friendship was at an end. The reason he did this was that in the event of some great and dire misfortune overtaking Polycrates he might not suffer that distress of mind which he would be sure to experience in the case of a man who was his guest-friend. (Hdt. 3, 39-43).

The significance of the ring in the story of Polycrates is well brought out by Professor Bury in his *Ancient Greek Historians*, (p. 58): "The story of the ring of Polycrates turns on an old motive, the finding of something lost in a fish's belly, but its point in connection with Polycrates has been explained only the other day. The casting of the ring into the sea was symbolic of thalassocracy; it was the same mythical ring as that of Minos, which in the poem of Bacchylides Theseus sought in the halls of Amphitrite; its recovery was fatal to the ruler of the seas." This idea of thalassocracy was in the air in the fifth century, when Themistocles revealed its possibilities, and Cimon and Pericles converted it into an actuality.

The best qualities of the modern short-story, it seems to me.

are in evidence here, while the simplicity and gracefulness of style of the artist are the elusive enemy of his would-be translator.

THE STORY OF HIPPOCLIDES

The admiration of Herodotus for Pericles, a descendant in the third generation from Megacles of the Alcmaeonidae, a family with which he shows his sympathy, is revealed in an anecdote that forms a sequel to the story of Hippoclide to the effect that Agariste, granddaughter of the Agariste who is the heroine of the story, had a dream that a lion would be born to her, and a few days later gave birth to Pericles. This is the only reference to the great statesman which the historian permits himself to make.

The story of Hippoclide runs somewhat as follows: Clisthenes, son of Aristonymus, grandson of Myron, greatgrandson of Andreas, had a daughter whose name was Agariste. It was his ambition to pick out for her the very best of all the Greeks and make her a present in marriage to him. So in the course of the Olympic games and in the hour of victory in the four-horse chariot race Clisthenes made proclamation that any Greek who thought himself good enough to become Clisthenes' son-in-law should report at the end of sixty days, or sooner, at Sicyon on the understanding that Clisthenes would carry out the contract within one year from that date. Then all the Greeks that were proud of themselves or of their native-land thronged to the wooing, and for them Clisthenes made a race-track and a wrestling-ring to meet this very situation. (Then follows the list of contestants from all parts of Greece, including *Magna Graecia*, Athens being represented by Megacles, son of the Alcmaeon that visited Croesus, and Hippoclide, the richest and comeliest Athenian).

Now when the suitors had arrived within the time appointed, Clisthenes first inquired each man's land and lineage, and then, detaining them a year, he tested thoroughly their virility, temperament, breeding, and manners, meeting them in personal conferences and in a body. He would also conduct the younger

members of the group to the various gymnasia; but it was at the banquet-table he made his most searching test. During their entire stay he pursued this course, at the same time entertaining them elaborately. Indeed the most favorable impression was made by the suitors that came from Athens, and of these, Hippoclide, Tisander's son, was in special favor, partly because of his manly bearing and partly because he traced his lineage to the Cypselids of Corinth.

When the day appointed for the celebration of the marriage-feast was at hand, and Clisthenes had to render his decision as to the man of his choice, he sacrificed a hundred oxen and gave an elaborate feast to the suitors themselves and to the whole population of Sicyon. After the dinner was over, the suitors entered a contest in music, and in public speaking. As the wine flowed freely — *in vino veritas* — Hippoclide, now leading the others by a large margin, gave direction to the flute-player to strike up a solemn dance-measure, and, as he did so, the suitor danced. To be sure, his dancing pleased himself, but the attitude of Clisthenes, as he saw it all, changed to distrust. Then, after a respite, Hippoclide bade an attendant carry in a table; and when the table was brought in, first he danced upon it Laconian figures, then Attic for a change, and, thirdly, standing upon his head upon the table, he gesticulated with his legs. The first and second times he danced, Clisthenes was filled with loathing at the thought of Hippoclide for a son-in-law by reason of his dancing and his shamelessness, and yet, wishing to avoid an outbreak, restrained himself; but when he saw him gesticulating with his legs, he could keep still no longer and said: "O son of Tisander, you have danced your wife away!" But Hippoclide answered and said: "Hippoclide doesn't care!" And hence this saying arose.

Presently Clisthenes called for silence, and spoke before the assembled multitude as follows: "Gentlemen, and suitors for the hand of my daughter, I have only words of commendation for all of you, and if it were in my power I would gratify every one of you, without singling out one for special distinction or rejecting the rest; but as it is an impossibility in making my award

of but a single maiden to please all alike, I grant as a bonus to those of you who are disappointed in the matter of this marriage a talent of silver to each one as a slight token of my appreciation of his high regard for my family and in recognition of his long absence from home; but to Alcmaeon's son, Megacles, I plight my daughter Agariste's troth in accordance with the laws of Athens." When Megacles said, "I accept the trust," Clisthenes had the marriage solemnized.

A remarkable parallel to the story of Hippoclides, not generally known, occurs in an Indian fable which has been translated by T. W. Rhys Davids in *Buddhist Birth-Stories*, (vol. 1, p. 291 ff), and is reproduced in Macan's *Herodotus* (vol. 2, p. 304 ff). It is as follows:

THE DANCING PEACOCK

Long ago, in the first age of the world, the quadrupeds chose the Lion as their king, the fishes the Leviathan, and the birds the Golden Goose.

Now the royal Golden Goose had a daughter, a young goose most beautiful to see; and he gave her her choice of a husband. And she chose the one she liked the best.

For, having given her the right to choose, he called together all the birds in the Himalaya region. And crowds of geese, and peacocks, and other birds of various kinds, met together on a great flat piece of rock.

The king sent for his daughter, saying, "Come and choose the husband you like best!" On looking over the assembly of the birds, she caught sight of the peacock, with a neck as bright as gems, and a many-colored tail; and she made the choice with the words, "Let this one be my husband!" So the assembly of the birds went up to the peacock, and said, "Friend Peacock! this king's daughter having to choose her husband from amongst so many birds has fixed her choice upon you!"

"Up to to-day you would not see my greatness," said the peacock; so overflowing with delight that in breach of all modesty he began to spread his wings and dance in the midst of the vast assembly. And in dancing he exposed himself.

Then the royal Golden Goose was shocked. And he said, "This fellow has neither modesty in his heart, nor decency in his outward behavior! I shall not give my daughter to him. He has broken loose from all sense of shame!" And he uttered this verse to all the assembly:

"Pleasant is your cry, brilliant is your back,
Almost like the opal in its color is your neck,
The feathers in your tail reach about a fathom's length,
But to such a dancer I can give no daughter, sir, of mine."

Then the king in the midst of the whole assembly bestowed his daughter on a young goose, his nephew, and the peacock was covered with shame at not getting the fair gosling, and rose straight up from the place and flew away.

But the king of the Golden Geese went back to the place where he dwelt.

It is impossible to determine the age of this Indian tale. Its very face bears the marks of primitiveness. We are conscious that it is a long step from this fable to the story of Hippoclides as it is told in Herodotus. The dancing peacock has disappeared, as Macan well remarks, but the frivolous and immodest soul of the splendid bird inhabits forever the body of Hippoclides in the enchanted pages of Herodotean story.

There are many other stories, no two alike, which the writer could have used by way of illustration, which will bear out the statement with which he closes that, though the honor is unsought by Herodotus, he is entitled to a place, second to none, among the best short-story writers and best short-story tellers in the world.



The Samian Stories of Herodotus

Author(s): Henry R. Immerwahr

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The Samian Stories of Herodotus

HENRY R. IMMERWAHR

IN A COPY of Herodotus once owned by Swift there is a short critique of the author under the title *Judicium de Herodoto post longum tempus relecto*, in which Swift praises Herodotus for the fairness of his historical judgment, the simplicity of his rhetoric, and the excellence of his moral precepts, but adds that the narrative bristles with tedious interruptions, "unde oritur . . . legentibus confusio et exinde oblivio."¹ This complaint is a common one; it persists not only with ordinary readers, but with scholars as well. It indicates the importance of the study of structure for an understanding of the work of Herodotus. The assumption that he is primarily a story teller presupposes that he made little effort at overall organization; and conversely, the existence of an articulated and unified plan would prove that he is more than that. The study of how Herodotus organizes must be the main basis in answering the many other questions which may be put to the work, such as its general purpose, the audience for which it was written, its sources, its reliability as a source, or the historiographic and philosophic principles embodied in it.

It would seem best to approach the question by analyzing a section of Herodotus to see how it fits into the work as a whole. From this point of view, the stories about Samos in the third book, which are perhaps the despair of modern scholars, may be chosen. Herodotus tells much about Samian history, but in a seemingly disconnected way. The segment of Samian history included by him in his work comprises a period beginning in the thirties of the sixth century when the island was the only important independent state in Asia Minor and is described as a thalassocracy under Polycrates; it continues with Darius' con-

quest and Samian participation in the Ionian Revolt, and ends with Samian initiative in bringing the Ionians over to the Greek side at the time of Mycale. Here the narrative of Herodotus ends, but his readers would have been aware of the subsequent history of Samos as a member of the Athenian Empire and her "enslavement" by Athens in the Samian War of 441.

There would be nothing unusual, in the Herodotean scheme of things, in thus bringing into prominence a city state which (in the words of the proem) had formerly been great, but had become small.² But in the eyes of some critics, Herodotus has prejudiced his case first by showing a distinct bias, it is claimed, in favor of the Samians, and secondly by breaking the narrative into disconnected sections. His bias could be explained biographically: Herodotus had spent some time on the island before he went to Athens. Jacoby, who has developed this view in detail, further proceeds to demonstrate how Herodotus has taken a segment of Samian history (namely that dealing with Polycrates and the capture of the island by Darius) and has inserted it, not all in one place, but in three separate sections, thus creating three digressions out of what had once been, no doubt, an independent lecture³ (see the diagram at the end of this paper). For "reasons of economy," as Jacoby has it, that lecture has been torn to pieces in a manner which, even in Herodotus, is superficial. This is a severe judgment, and we have here the type of structural problem I have mentioned.

Now it is true that in structural analysis a good deal of progress has been made since Jacoby, especially through the work of Hermann Fränkel, Max Pohlenz, and more recently Sir John Myres.⁴ It has long been observed that Herodotus himself refers to his

whole work, as well as to portions of it, both as a *logos* and as separate *logoi*. *Logos* is for him at once the reasoned argument and the form it takes: account, story, chapter. Pohlenz describes these units almost entirely in formal terms. At the beginning of a *logos*, Herodotus announces his subject, and at the end he (at least partially) summarizes it, often returning to the previous argument, if this was interrupted by the subject of his *logos*. A *logos*, then, is simply a portion of narrative set off by Herodotus himself. Pohlenz has also observed the importance which certain summary statements acquire through repetition of the same idea; through verbal repetition of key phrases, Herodotus has created for himself something like a skeleton structure for his whole work.

For the analysis of the internal structure of the *logoi*, and of the key phrases, the treatment of the joints between *logoi* is of interest. These joints are formed, not by phrases intended to separate one *logos* from the next, but by connective phrases, joined with each other by *mén—dé*, or the like. In Fränkel's view of archaic prose, the isolated facts of experience come first, and the connections second, but Herodotus shows a late stage in the development, in that his connections are much more strongly and subtly established than, for example, in Hecataeus. This statement is true, but it does not go far enough. There are *logoi* in Herodotus, for example, which show a decided rhythmical arrangement; among these are his "dramatic" *logoi*, which usually contain an initial statement of unsolved conflict, long delaying elements in the form of speeches or subsidiary detail, and a sudden end, often involving a change of fortune. The story of the death of Atys, the son of Croesus, is a good example. It can also be observed that Herodotus, whenever he can, places subsidiary material at points of rest, either between major *logoi*, or between well-defined stages of the main action. The rhythm thus cre-

ated in the work is of a more subtle kind than Myres' recent analysis of the work indicates. Myres' two main types of structure are what he calls the frieze and the pediment, i.e., straight sequences of events and circular compositions. Such elements (whether we find Myres' sculptural metaphors successful or not) can, it is true, be found in the work, in particular in certain small and highly organized *logoi*. Myres' terminology, however, in no way eliminates the need for a more detailed description of specific structures in the context of their particular meaning.

II

The three "digressions" on Samian history from Polycrates to Darius' conquest are the following: the first deals with a war fought by Sparta against Polycrates and in support of the Samian enemies of the tyrant. The second relates the murder of Polycrates by Oroetes the Persian satrap of Sardis. The third, after describing in some detail the Samian constitutional struggles following the death of Polycrates, tells of the capture of the island by the Persians. It is possible to abstract a kind of history of the island from these *logoi*; this would contain an account of Polycrates' early rule, his relations with Amasis and Cambyses, the revolt of the Samians which led to the Spartan war, and his death. Finally, it would consist of the story of Maeandrius' attempt to introduce democracy on the island, prior to the Persian conquest. Such a history, however, is clearly not a *logos*. For Herodotus emphasizes different themes in each of the three stories. In the first, the main subject is the war of Sparta which carried her into Asia; to this two smaller *logoi* are added, one on the ring of Polycrates, the other on Periander and his son Lycophron. The second *logos* deals with the personal history of the tyrant to the exclusion of other Samian history. Only the third *logos* is Samian history in the proper sense; but it is told from the Persian point of view. These are

not three parts of a single *logos*, but three separate, though related, *logoi*. The reason for this treatment will become apparent if we consider the exact place in which each *logos* is inserted.

The Spartan war against Samos follows the account of Cambyses' dealings in Egypt. After the conquest, he had first tried to fight the Ethiopians, Ammonians, and Carthaginians; subsequently, he had gone mad, killing his brother Smerdis and his sister, to whom he was married. He had sinned against the customs of Egypt and of all men: Herodotus closes this *logos* with the famous Pindaric quotation that *nómos* is king of all. It is at this point that the first Samian *logos* intervenes. Cambyses' death is described shortly thereafter when the story reverts to Persian affairs. Cambyses hears of the revolt of the two Magi, and this (as well as a self-inflicted wound in the thigh) brings him to his senses, and on his death-bed he utters a warning that the Persians must restore Persia's power now lost to the Medes. Thus begins one of the longest sections of unbroken narrative in Herodotus which includes the Conspiracy of the Seven against the Magi, the Accession of Darius, and the Description of the Power of Darius in the list of satrapies, ending with an account of the wealth of the far corners of the world.

At the end of these Persian *logoi*, there are two anecdotes, each containing an afterthought. The first tells of "a plain in Asia" which is surrounded by high mountains. Originally five rivers flowed through five outlets into the surrounding plain, watering the land of the five nations who dwell there; but the Persian king has closed the passes, and he opens them only in return for special gifts in addition to the regular tribute, when one of the nations has great need of water. The name of the king is not mentioned, for Persia acquired these lands long before Darius, but the reference to the tribute shows that he is included here, for prior to Darius no tribute was

paid in the empire on a fixed basis. Thus, the story refers back to the description of the empire tribute, and it casts an unfavorable light upon Darius. The second anecdote concerns Intaphernes, one of the Seven Conspirators, who is killed by Darius right after the accession in a fit of suspicion. This takes us back to the story of the Seven near the beginning of the account of the Overthrow of the Magi, and again it casts an unfavorable light upon Darius. A third story of this kind is our second Samian *logos*, for the mention of Polycrates takes us back to the end of the reign of Cambyses. These three stories are a brief review, in retrospect, of the main points of the preceding Persian *logoi*. These *logoi* themselves deal with the Revolt of the Magi and the successful reestablishment of Persian power by Darius: the first two Samian *logoi* have the function of isolating that group of events. Herodotus does not break the narrative between the reigns of Cambyses and Darius; instead Cambyses' death has become the introduction, and Darius' accession the high point, of a group of *logoi* describing *the dangers of royal succession and the successful reestablishment of power in Persia*. For Cambyses had died "without any male or female offspring whatsoever." The treatment of Darius in these *logoi* is favorable, while in the later Campaign *logoi* it is rather unfavorable; the three anecdotes perform the function of changing the reader's point of view with respect to the king.

There are two further links added between the three anecdotes and the Campaigns of Darius. The first tells of Darius' murder of Oroetes (which Herodotus regards as divine punishment for the murder of Polycrates), and the second tells the story of the Greek physician Democedes, once of Polycrates' household, who persuades Darius to send a party of spies into Greece. This event, which constituted the first Persian penetration into

Greece, balances the Spartan War against Polycrates in which the Lacedaemonian Dorians had first gone into Asia.

There exists, then, a definite plan into which the separate logoi are worked, as component elements in a kind of circular disposition of small logoi grouped around the central core of the Revolt of the Magi and Accession and Empire of Darius. This means that the logoi of Herodotus' work must not be considered in isolation.

III

A closer analysis of the first Samian logos will show how individual logoi are affected by the overall design. It begins as follows: "While Cambyses was waging war against Egypt, the Lacedaemonians also made war against Samos and Polycrates son of Aeaces, who held the power in Samos, having risen in revolt." This takes us back in time, strictly speaking, for the Egyptian campaign of Cambyses had already come to a close. During the progress of his conquests, Polycrates had made a pact with Amasis: again we are moving back in time. Amasis broke the pact upon learning that Polycrates was always lucky, even in regaining the ring he had thrown into the sea. "Against this Polycrates," Herodotus continues, "who was in all respects lucky, the Spartans were waging war, having been summoned by those Samians who later on founded Cydonia in Crete." Why were they summoned? Again we move back in time: when Cambyses was preparing for war against Egypt, Polycrates had offered to send certain enemies of his to join Cambyses' army. Polycrates did this not only in order to rid himself of the Samian opposition, but also because Amasis was no longer his friend. The second reason is not specifically mentioned by Herodotus, but must, I believe, be understood.⁵ If this is correct, the famous ring story becomes a direct motivating factor of the Spartan campaign and the whole logos has chronological, as well

as causal, unity. The Samian opposition eventually went from Egypt to Sparta to enlist Spartan support against Polycrates. "Thereupon the Spartans made their preparations and waged war against Samos." Once more the guiding sentence which articulates the logos is repeated. According to the Samians, the Spartans fought because they had formerly received benefits from Samos in war; according to the Spartans, because of two Samian robberies. Allies of Sparta against Polycrates were the Corinthians, who fought because Periander, a generation earlier, had sent two hundred Corcyraean boys to be castrated, but the Samians had intercepted them and returned them to Corcyra. Now there had been hostility between Corinth and the Corcyraeans (their colonists and "children" we may add) from the beginning, and hence the Corinthians were now taking vengeance on the Samians. Herodotus continues his inquiry into the origins of vengeance by asking why Periander had sent the boys in the first place. The reason was another "destruction of children": the Corcyraeans had started the trouble by murdering Periander's son Lycophron. At this point the backward journey ends and Herodotus returns abruptly to the Spartan war; but the account of this war seems an anticlimax: for forty days the Spartans besiege Samos, then they return. It is clear that the importance of this war does not lie in its course or its results, but merely in its symbolic significance as a transgression of Sparta in Asia. The Samian exiles now flee and eventually they settle in Cydonia in Crete where they are destroyed by the Aeginetans: Aegina bore Samos an old grudge, since the Samians had once waged war against Aegina.

I have dwelt on this logos at some length because the commentators, including Pohlenz, find it hard to see its simple and effective structure.⁶ The fascination of the reader with Polycrates and Periander must not stand

in the way of an appreciation of Herodotus' interest in the Spartan war, an interest which derives from its relevance to the great struggle between East and West rather than from its intrinsic merits. Therefore, the *logos* is clearly articulated by four statements mentioning the Spartan War, and each section falling between these statements is necessary in explanation of the causes of the war. An interesting feature of the *logos* is that its early sub-sections progressively go back into time—the *logos* is partly written backward, as it were. Fränkel has commented on the ease with which, for the archaic mind, a time sequence may be arrested or reversed.⁷ But here there is a special reason for backward writing: the Spartan war itself had happened at a date which Herodotus in his narrative had already passed. Using this principle, Herodotus has constructed a dramatic *logos* with two large delaying sections (which explain the two causes of the war) and a short climax. The sub-sections of this *logos* are also *logoi*, but they have been cut down at both ends for purposes of adaptation; this is true especially of the Polycrates and Periander stories. Such cutting implies subordination. On the other hand, the whole *logos* on the Spartan War is written with reference to the Cambyses *logos*. In fact, Herodotus clearly works from a single synchronism backwards and forwards: this synchronism is the help given by Polycrates to Cambyses against Egypt. It is fair to say that the *logos* of the Spartan War was written in its exact form for the place which it now occupies.

This impression is confirmed by the affinities which the *logos* shows with the surrounding narrative. There are first of all several backward and forward references. Those to Cambyses have been mentioned. The ring story is also the last event in which Amasis takes part, and this had been prepared for at the end of the second book where Amasis' friendship with Polycrates is referred to (2. 182. 2). Mention has also

been made of the forward-looking aspect of the Spartan transgression into Asia; and further, the death of Polycrates is expected.

More important, however, is the influence of the first Samian *logos* upon the *logoi* on Cambyses. When Polycrates throws the ring into the sea, he is attempting to change fate by human cleverness. Cambyses, on his death bed, recognizes that by killing his brother he has tried in vain to forestall what had to happen—in words reminiscent of the letter of Amasis to Polycrates.⁸ This is an unexpected change of mind: when ordering his brother's murder, he had been insane (3. 30. 1); now, having regained his senses, he treats the murder as a ruler's excessive and futile precaution. Only here is it apparent that Cambyses' madness was a form of *âtē*, of which he is cured before his death, so that he may become the warner of the Persians. The Samian *logos* is instrumental in changing the reader's view about Cambyses.

The Periander story is important in a similar manner: it reaffirms the idea that uncertainty of succession is a basic difficulty of absolute rule, which is the central idea of the Overthrow of the Magi and Accession of Darius. Stories in support of this theme abound in the third book: Cambyses, having killed the important members of his own family, dies without offspring; the wife of Intaphernes, in a celebrated saying, prefers a brother to a husband—surely, we may add, in order to save her own family; the daughter of Polycrates prefers a father to a husband. Connected is also the story about the wild animals of Arabia (3. 109): the winged snake kills her mate after conception and in turn is punished by the child who bites his way through her womb. The two seemingly most extraneous elements of the first Samian *logos* are thus most intimately connected with the central ideas of the Persian *logoi* which precede and follow it. In this way, the emphasis lies on the main characteristic of a particular historical

situation, the Revolt of the Magi.

IV

These multiple relations do not exhaust the significance of the stories of Periander and Polycrates; characteristically, each tale has also a character and movement of its own. This is true especially of the two most famous stories about Polycrates: the ring story in the first Samian logos, and the Death of Polycrates, which forms the second Samian logos. I know of no commentator who has given a favorable verdict about Herodotus' procedure of cutting the story of Polycrates into two widely separated parts. Pohlenz, for example, assumes an original logos on the life of Polycrates, saying that the first part of it has been clumsily combined with the Spartan War, while the second part—the murder—was postponed for reasons of chronology. Yet the most disturbing feature of the cut is precisely that the chronology is not strictly observed, for the murder of Polycrates, although it is reported after the accession of Darius, took place toward the end of Cambyses' reign.⁹ The link with the reign of Darius is the figure of Oroetes, who was killed by Darius at the beginning of his reign. Again, the vengeance motif is more important than chronology. We like to think of the story of Polycrates as one, but when told as a unit, the story is not that given by Herodotus. In such a reconstruction there would be only one central character, Polycrates, who should, one feels, be presented in a continuous logos somewhat in the manner of the Croesus story. Instead, a complete break occurs between the end of the Spartan War and Oroetes' first overtures to Polycrates. This break (which admittedly covers only a short period of time) hides the origin of the crucial fact about Polycrates, his ambition to found a Greek empire. Furthermore, the Spartan war as such has little to do with Polycrates' fortunes, which are not emphasized in the account of it. Herodotus has simply given two

static pictures: Polycrates and Amasis, and Polycrates and Oroetes, the first showing the tyrant's luck, the second his miserable end.

Everything becomes clear if the two stories are considered not as two stories about Polycrates, but as narratives about two pairs of characters: Polycrates and Amasis, and Oroetes and Polycrates. Then the famous ring story turns out to be one of the best Herodotean compositions. Its structure develops from the pact of friendship between Amasis and Polycrates: *xeiniē*. Amasis was Polycrates' friend, but Polycrates was ruthless in friendship. In his wars with other tyrants "he led everyone into captivity, without exception." "It was kinder to a friend, he remarked, to return to him what had previously been taken from him, than to abstain from taking anything of his in the first place" (3. 39. 4). The contrast between the two unequal friends is the idea determining the structure of the logos. Amasis had earlier been described as clever and friendly, addicted to parties and to social intercourse with Greeks; as a true friend, he is now much concerned about Polycrates' excessive good fortune. The ring story falls into five sections beginning and ending with a message by Amasis to Polycrates. The first letter develops the plan to outwit, or pacify, fortune and the jealousy of the gods. The second section describes how Polycrates chooses the ring and throws it into the sea in front of a large audience; but a few days later, a fisherman finds a large fish. The third and central section reports the conversation between king and fisherman: "Oh king, I did not think I ought to sell this one" (holding up the fish) "although I live by my own labor, but he seemed to be worthy of your kingdom: so I brought it to give to you." The king answers: "You have certainly done right; our thanks both for the words and the gift; and we ask you to dinner." The politeness of the fisherman is

topped only by the king's friendliness. But the latter is unlike the king, and the gift, although offered in sincerity, is nevertheless false. The fourth section relates the discovery of the ring in the fish, and Polycrates advises Amasis of the supernatural coincidence. Amasis, in the last section, learns through Polycrates' letter that "man cannot save his fellow man from that which is fated to happen," and so he sends a message renouncing the pact of friendship. "This he did for the following reason, that he should not feel pained when Polycrates became the victim of a great misfortune." It is true Herodotean wisdom to renounce entanglement. *Algein tèn psychén*, the phrase used here, corresponds closely to one used just previously of the attempt of Polycrates to hurt himself by losing the ring: it is not used elsewhere in Herodotus.

It is then a story of Amasis as much as of Polycrates, and Amasis, not Polycrates, determines the structure. The tale is symmetrically composed around the meeting of the king and the fisherman, except that as it progresses, each episode is shorter than the preceding, and at the end the letter of Amasis to Polycrates is not given verbally. Thereby the story acquires greater speed as it progresses. The whole incident is described from the point of view of one looking at the career of Polycrates at this point: he is ruthless, untrustworthy and blind to the possibility of misfortune. The story has its greatest appeal as a warning to the reader, and Herodotus has ended it at the point when Amasis leaves his friend; he sympathizes with Amasis and not with Polycrates.

The Oroetes-Polycrates incident, in turn, is to a degree independent of the Amasis story. It is part of an account of the crimes of Oroetes which are partly directed against his fellow Persians and their children, and among which the murder of Polycrates is merely the first of a series. Polycrates, in a new characterization which is com-

plementary to the first, is now the magnificent ruler who was the first Greek to aspire to thalassocracy. His downfall is due to his desire for power, which he hopes to acquire in a plot against the Persian king. When he departs for Oroetes' court, he heeds none of the dreams and warnings and thus he perishes "in a manner unbecoming his person and his plans, for of all the Greek tyrants outside of Sicily he was the foremost in magnificence"—*megaloprepeiē*. The mention of magnificence does not entail a moral judgment, as has been thought, but contrasts dramatically the splendor and the fall of the man. A ruler's high thoughts are the cause of his downfall, as Artabanus tells Xerxes in the seventh book.¹⁰ Herodotus ends with the words: "To such an end did the great luck of Polycrates come, just as Amasis the Egyptian king had foretold"—*proemanteúsato*. It is only here that the reader is made aware of the unity of the two episodes, for strictly speaking Amasis had made no prophecy. The phrase about Amasis is nevertheless genuine, in all probability, and should not be bracketed; for what we have here is a re-interpretation of the Amasis episode. Herodotus is saying that in addition to Polycrates the rebel, and Polycrates the great ruler, there is a point of view which combines them both.

This third view, of the rise and fall of the ruler, is very briefly treated by Herodotus, but it has always struck the interpreters first, because it falls into the pattern of the Croesus logos, a logos which furnishes the model for the much briefer treatments of Cyrus, Cambyses, Xerxes, and Polycrates. Verbal references in the Polycrates story establish the pattern firmly. When Amasis writes to Polycrates: "I do not like your constant good luck, for I know the jealousy of the divine power," he is verbally quoting Solon (1. 32. 1). When he speaks of the danger of being "completely uprooted" after a period of good luck, he is using

a metaphor which recurs in the same speech of Solon (1. 32. 9) and, in a different form, in Artabanus' speech before Xerxes (7. 10e). The other elements of the story are also familiar from these and other stories in Herodotus: the attempt to outwit fate, the inescapability of it, the personal responsibility for the downfall despite its necessity. The fate of Polycrates exhibits the same view of the complementary nature of human and divine motivation that is fundamental elsewhere in Herodotus.¹¹ Polycrates' end is unique only in its particular violence, which eliminates any chance of self-recognition. The latter is instead exemplified by Amasis who realizes the uselessness of friendship where a friend is doomed. The meaning of Polycrates' fate is made clear through the repetition of a pattern, not in a complete logos.

V

The third Samian logos is the simple story of the Persian capture of the island, in three sections and an epilogue. Again, the first two sections give the causes for the campaign.¹² In the first, Polycrates' exiled brother Syloson persuades Darius to reinstate him in Samos after his brother's death. Syloson's condition is that it shall be done without violence or enslavement, and thereby the logos receives its theme: it deals with the enslavement of a people externally independent, but internally already under tyranny. The second section describes the internal slavery of the Samians, and explains why the Persians waged a more cruel war than they had intended. Maeandrius, formerly Polycrates' secretary and now his successor, tries to establish democracy in Samos, but the Samians force him and his brothers to become tyrannical, and the people are worse off than before. The discussion of democracy versus tyranny, implied in this episode, recalls the debate by the Seven Conspirators on the Persian constitution (3. 80-82), a parallel which is underlined by the fact that the Samian cam-

paign is conducted by the same Otanes who had spoken in favor of democracy and who continued to be the only Persian living a free life under the monarchy of Darius. His conduct now is paradoxical: by force of circumstances he is obliged to kill many of the inhabitants so that Syloson receives the island "empty of men." The capture of Samos is the first Campaign logos of Darius, and the narrative progresses uninterruptedly from here on.

VI

At this point we may pause to reconsider the question of the unity of the Samian logoi. First of all, it would appear that the so-called confusion of these logoi arises from a desire, on the part of Herodotus, to subordinate. He is after all primarily speaking of Cambyses, the Magi, and Darius, and he has inserted the Samian stories where there was a place for them. The first two logoi are thus placed at points of rest, following the logoi of Cambyses in Egypt, and before and after the Revolt of the Magi and the Accession and Power of Darius. The third logos is placed first in the sequence of the campaigns of Darius. Only this last logos is placed chronologically. Secondly, in the process each of the Samian logoi has acquired its own themes and its own connections with the surrounding narrative. The principle of affinity of adjoining narrative is in fact fundamental in Herodotus. Thirdly, the logoi are written with a view to the particular place which they now occupy. Fourthly, they follow certain patterns, such as the pattern of the fall of great men, or the pattern of the ethnographic logos (the latter is merely hinted at in the curious reference to the marvels of Samos at the very end of the first Samian logos), which results in their gaining a more general significance. This last point is to my mind decisive: in addition to the logoi, Herodotus' work is specifically characterized by the recurrence of patterns. Each isolated tale in Herodotus bears a relation, or a resemblance, to some other story or event, and is struc-

tured to express this relationship. The difficulties in appreciating Herodotus lie not in his lack of organization, but in an excess of relatedness. Herodotus reports each event as he thinks he found it in the tradition, but he proceeds at once to connect it (by affinity or contrast) with all other pertinent events, which for him coexist in a series of ideal patterns. Hence it is possible, in one and the same story, for several different meanings to appear simultaneously or (as in the Polycrates story) one after the other. Herodotus' use of the artistic features of archaic prose does not make him an archaic writer, in Fränkel's sense, for his true aim is to create complex units of composition, and he is therein influenced by tragedy as well as by the epic.

This relatedness of events seems to me of the very essence of historical knowledge. When we say that Herodotus subordinates Samos to Cambyses and Darius, we recognize that he wishes to present a large historical picture of a period of history. He does in fact create his periods of history by the disposition of logoi. The purpose of the present arrangement is to relate the affairs of Greece to the Orient at the time of the great crisis of succession after the rule of Cambyses. Upon investigation, Herodotus found that at that time the most remarkable East Greek state was Samos; remarkable externally, because they were still free from the yoke of the barbarian; remarkable also internally, because of the struggle over tyranny. He pointed up the similarities of Polycrates, despite his Greek nationality, with the rulers of the East. Herodotus returns in several places to such a comparison between East and West; three such comparisons in the early part of his work are made at the time of Croesus, at the time of Cambyses and Darius, and again at the time of the Ionian Revolt. In each case, he also compares the forms of rule. To the splendor of the rule of Croesus corresponds the early splendor of Peisistratus.¹³ To the

struggles of power at the time of the Magi correspond the struggles of Samos. At the time of the Ionian Revolt the condition of the Persian Empire is slavery; the Ionian tyrants are slaves also, while Athens already has freed herself from the tyranny of the Peisistratids: tyranny has outlived itself. That this is a unified historical conception appears clearly from the use made by Herodotus of Periander in these three places: under Croesus, the Arion story furnishes a vivid picture of the splendor of his court; in connection with Polycrates, we see him in trouble with the succession of his reign; in connection with the liberation of Athens, the picture is the gruesome one of an unnatural crime against his wife and the disrobing of the ladies of Corinth. In three stages, tyranny is shown degenerating, and these stages are ideally present in the picture of a tyrant who preceded the last two stages and who was one of the greatest of the tyrants.¹⁴

VII

The Samian logoi, then, are one unit in a series of three, which describe the history of tyranny, and the Polycrates story also is one in a series of three, which concern the metaphysical view of the fate of man. It is perhaps no accident that in the whole work there are three main places where the Samians are important. The two latest of these were forced upon Herodotus' attention by the history of the Persian Wars and their antecedents. These were the Samian participation in the Ionian Revolt and their participation at Mycale. The earlier stage (the three Samian logoi proper) surely owes its existence in part to these later events, for the biographical explanation does not account for their special relevance. Samos really expressed something that had to be said somewhere in the work. It is characteristic of Herodotus' Samians that they are usually in opposition to the rest of the Ionians. If we take the situation of 479 and look back into history (as I believe Herodotus to have

done) we find him consistent with himself in his judgments on the Samians. In 479, before Mycale, the Samians were the first Ionians to come over to the Greek cause (9. 90 ff.), and during the battle they took the initiative (9. 103. 2) in opposing the Persians, despite being disarmed. After the battle, Samos was among the first Ionian islands to be admitted to the Panhellenic League. At Samos, there occurred the debate over the fate of the Ionians, who were thought unable to defend themselves. This contrast between the weak Ionians and the active Samians is pointed up also in the Ionian Revolt, except that

in a sense the roles there are reversed. Herodotus had little sympathy for the Ionians and he considered the Ionian Revolt a slave revolt; hence, when the Samians deserted the Ionian cause at Lade, and went over to the Persians, they were, to be sure, not courageous, but more sensible than the rest of the Ionians, for they acted with independence (6. 13. 2). This, and not his earlier visit to the island, caused Herodotus to excuse their behavior at Lade somewhat. He saw in the Samians an Ionian people who, to be sure, were not free, but where the possibility of freedom was intermittently being reaffirmed in

OUTLINE OF HERODOTUS 3. 1-149

1-16: Cambyses subdues Egypt.

17-26: He attempts to subdue the Ethiopians, Ammonians, Carthaginians.

27-38: Madness and crimes of Cambyses in Egypt. *Nómos basileús*.

39-60: SPARTAN WAR AGAINST SAMOS

39 : Accession of Polycrates.

40-43: Story of the ring of P. and his friendship with Amasis.

44.1 : Second reference to Spartan War.

44-46: Polycrates offers help to Cambyses against Egypt;
Samian exiles, after a defeat, appeal to Sparta.

47.1 : Third mention of Spartan War.

47.2 : Reasons for Spartan participation.

48-53: Reasons for Corinthian participation.

48-49: 300 children abducted from Corcyra by Periander.

50-53: Periander's quarrel with his son Lycophron.

54-56: The Spartan campaign against Samos.

57-59: Fate of the Samian exiles (founding of Cydonia).

60 : Architectural marvels of Samos.

61-75: Revolt of Magi (the false Smerdis). Death of Cambyses. Otanes' daughter discovers the false Smerdis. The plot of the seven conspirators against the Magi. Death of Prexaspes.

76-87: Killing of the Magi. Debate on future government of Persia. Darius becomes king through the neighing of his horse.

88-96: Parts of the empire paying tribute to Darius.

97-116: Wealth of the far regions of the world.

117 : Story of the plain in Asia.

118-119: Death of Intaphernes.

120-125: OROETES MURDERS POLYCRATES

126-128: Oroetes killed by Darius.

129-138: Democedes leads a Persian party of spies into Greece.

139-149: CAPTURE OF SAMOS BY THE PERSIANS: first foreign campaign of Darius.

139-141: Syloson asks Darius to be restored in Samos.

142-143: Maeandrius attempts to establish democracy in Samos.

144-147: The Persians take Samos.

148: Maeandrius thrown out of Sparta.

149 : Syloson receives Samos "empty of men."

150 ff. : Darius' Babylonian expedition.

internal and external revolts. It is true that this struggle for freedom went on in many Ionian cities, but Samos could conveniently stand for all of them. At an earlier period he had made a similar use of the Phocaeans (1. 164), but from the 30's of the sixth century Samos took their place. The three Samian logoi of book three are written from the same point of view; therefore Polycrates is treated first as a rebel, then as a competitor of the Persian king. This view is also the reason for emphasizing the internal and external struggles on the island. Maeandrius, the would-be democrat who turned tyrant, well symbolizes the Ionian world. "For the (Samians) were, it would seem, unwilling to be free." Yet the Samian rebels who fought Polycrates, did so undoubtedly in the cause of freedom. The Samians are an important example of the struggle between freedom and slavery which is a fundamental theme of Herodotus' work.

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NOTES

¹ *The Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. W. Scott, 2nd edition (Boston, 1893) vol. 9, p. 266. See J.

Wells, *Studies in Herodotus* (Oxford, 1923) p. 215.

² Her. 1. 5. 4.

³ F. Jacoby, *RE*, suppl. 2, s.v. "Herodotus," cols. 220-23; 428-29; 440; 466-67.

⁴ H. Fränkel, *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens* (Munich, 1955) pp. 40-96, reprints a famous article on "a stylistic peculiarity of early Greek literature," first published in 1924. M. Pohlenz, *Herodot der erste Geschichtschreiber des Abendlandes* (Leipzig, 1937) pp. 75-78 and elsewhere. W. A. A. van Otterlo, in his important study of "ring composition" (*Mededeelingen d. Nederl. Akad. v. Wet.*, N.R. no. 7, 3, 1944, pp. 131-76) treats the first Samian logos in a somewhat different manner from that presented above (see pp. 144-45 and 161 ff.). J. L. Myres, *Herodotus, Father of History* (Oxford, 1953) pp. 89-134, especially pp. 79 and 97-99; cf. also pp. 161-68. Cf. A. W. Gomme, *The Greek Attitude to Poetry and History* (Berkeley, 1954) pp. 88-92 and 113-15.

⁵ Compare the hostility between Athens and Persia as an implied cause for the success of Aristagoras' mission in Athens during the Ionian Revolt (5. 96. 2 and 97).

⁶ Pohlenz, *Herodot*, p. 77.

⁷ Fränkel, *Wege und Formen*, pp. 85-86.

⁸ Her. 3. 65. 3; cf. 3. 43. 1.

⁹ Her. 3. 120. 1. Pohlenz, *Herodot*, p. 76 and note 3.

¹⁰ Her. 7. 10e, end.

¹¹ *TAPhA* 85 (1954) 36.

¹² Such sections explaining the immediate causes for events are an important feature of many Herodotean logoi; they might be named *aitie*-sections, as I shall propose elsewhere.

¹³ Her. 1. 59. 6; 64. 1-2.

¹⁴ Her. 1. 20 and 23-24; 3. 48-53; 5. 92 z-e. G. M. Hirst, "Herodotus on Tyranny versus Athens and Democracy," in her *Collected Classical Papers* (Oxford, 1938) pp. 97-110, deals with approximately the same subject, in book 3.

REMINDER

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Herodotus: Oral History with a Difference

MABEL L. LANG

*Paul Shorey Professor of Greek, Bryn Mawr College
The Richard A. F. Penrose Memorial Lecture**

I am honored by the opportunity to stand in for Russell Meiggs, although I share your disappointment at not hearing how he could have shown that Herodotus' *History* was one of those philosophical experiments that, in the words of Benjamin Franklin, "let Light into the Nature of things, . . . increase(d) the Power of Man over Matter, and multipli(ed) the Conveniences or Pleasures of Life."¹ Certainly Franklin himself regarded Herodotus' work in this light, quoting him not only on the origin of the Egyptian calendar² but also to illuminate some 1764 archaeological discoveries in Siberia.³

In the beginning was the Word, but History was not. At least if we are to take Cicero's word for it, Herodotus was the Father of History, and so the birthdate of history must have been delayed till the fifth century B.C. And because recently we have had to reckon with a born-again history which in many ways parallels the fifth-century original, some inquiry into the history of history and how it has come full circle to this new rebirth seems timely. There is, moreover, some prosaic justice in such an inquiry into *both* new beginnings of history, since at least from the point of view of Herodotus and the Greeks history itself is simply inquiry. And the nascent history of the present, like the history which Herodotus fathered, is a matter of asking questions and getting answers. As you know, the new version is called Oral History, rather redundantly in

Herodotean terms, since his inquiries seem to have been almost exclusively oral.

When this Oral History was invented, as the tradition, both oral and written, has it, by Allan Nevins in 1948, there was established at Columbia an Office of Oral History. The idea that history could be oral was apparently strange enough to modern minds nurtured on documents so that the office was more than once referred to as the Office of Oracle History.⁴ Whether there was any suggestion that either the practitioners of oral history or the live subjects they interviewed exhibit authority or merely indulged in oracular ambiguity, is perhaps less important than the unconsciously significant linkage back to Herodotus, for whom oracles not only seemed to motivate historical events but also served to interpret them, as when Croesus was told by Delphi that if he invaded Persia he would destroy a great kingdom,⁵ and because in Herodotus' accounting it never occurred to Croesus that it might be his own kingdom, the oracle is used both to characterize Croesus' arrogance and to justify his defeat.

Oracles aside, it is the oral nature of historical beginnings, both old and new, that we ought to credit partly at least to a lack then as now, but for very different reasons, of certain kinds of documents. Just as the sixth and fifth-century Greeks were able to conduct their business, government, war and worship with little use of the comparatively new-fangled alphabet, so we have reached a point where, although paperwork proliferates and copy-machines work overtime,

* Read 21 April 1983

much important business both private and public is conducted, without benefit of writing, on the telephone and in person when instead of written negotiations people can drive a few miles or fly half the world around to talk face to face. Learning about the background of contemporary and recent events in both circumstances would therefore involve making inquiry of those who took part in or assisted at possibly causative or effective discussions and decisions. And since the individual and personal nature of what Herodotus called inquiry (and the oral historians call interviewing) of those who participated in such activities tended to emphasize the role of personalities and personal motivation, both Herodotus and his latest descendants tend to see history in more or less biographical terms. This same emphasis on personality characterizes even the history resulting from oral inquiry about events and actions of the more distant past, since the human beings who transmitted the accounts to the historians' contemporaries presumably found the personal and human-interest aspects of the tradition most memorable.

It is in relation to this oral tradition about the past that we see another way in which the oral historians of the present seem to recapitulate the beginnings of history. For just as Herodotean inquiries ranged widely enough to include matters of anthropology, ethnology, geology, religion, sociology and zoology, so today's oral historians have suddenly found themselves overlapping and cooperating with folklorists who have long been interviewing the folk in order to assure the preservation of traditions not only about past events but also about folkways and all kinds of interactions with the world of nature. As one American folklorist, Richard Dorson, said in 1971:⁶

The old rigid polarization between history as scrupulously documented fact, and folklore as unverified rumor, falsehood, hearsay, old wives' tales—often equated with myth and legend in similar senses—is beginning to break down. His-

torians are moving closer to the methods of the folklorist through the new departure of oral history, and folklorists are becoming more history-minded as their discipline solidifies.

He later noted one difference in methodology: "The oral historian interviews while the folklorist in the field collects. It would never occur to a practitioner of oral history to set out in the morning toting his Sony or Wollensak . . . with little or no idea as to whom he will meet and record. . . . Yet this is exactly the way the folklorist operates." And if we may judge from his results, Herodotus combined both methods and both disciplines. When he explored Egypt, for example, he inquired from various people about everything from the activities of past pharaohs⁷ to why at one season all the Nile fish have bruises on one side of their heads,⁸ with side excursions into the source and nature of the Nile⁹ as well as embalming techniques and rituals involving cats and crocodiles.¹⁰

Let's look at a few other aspects of oral history today so that we may compare or contrast its problems and solutions with those of Herodotus, so that seeing what oral historians have found to be pitfalls and advantages in oral inquiry we may better understand Herodotus, and so that we may see how Oral History plays its part in the very Herodotean effort of the New History to base our knowledge of the past more broadly, on the principle that it is not only actions of governments but also the thoughts and passions of the governed that are important if we are to *realize* the past. In this endeavor the orientation of Herodotus and the Greeks was perhaps more useful than our own. For we think of ourselves as walking boldly, if somewhat blindly, into the future, either fleeing or pushed by the past behind us. The Greeks, on the other hand, saw themselves as facing the past and seeing it all, shading back into the mists of memory and myth, while the future, which they could not see, was behind them.

Oral History has been characterized in various ways, ranging from Barbara Tuchman's charge¹¹ that "oral history gathers trash and trivia with all the discrimination of a vacuum cleaner" to Edmund Spenser's unconscious prediction of its function and purpose:¹²

For deeds do die, however nobile donne,
And thoughts of men do as themselves decay,
But wise wordes taught in numbers for to runne,
Recorded by the Muses, live for ay.

Walter Lord, a popular practitioner of the art sees oral history as a way "to get the guts of the event, the heart of it."¹³ And Saul Benison asserts the value of oral inquiry in the history of medicine by emphasizing that more important than the detailing of discoveries is an understanding of the personality and mind-set that led to them.¹⁴ Finally, Louis Starr writes in the article on Oral History in the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*:¹⁵ "Oral history is more than a tool and less than a discipline."

Practitioners of Oral History are very quick to see the danger of assuming that oral history can tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and they must constantly deal with the problem of "knowing what kind of credence to give to a statement made many years after the event."¹⁶ Since an oral interview, particularly of a very important person whose decisions and actions are the raw material of history, has much in common with autobiography, although the subject is perhaps less guarded than in the formal written account, oral historians recognize that they may have to allow for and compensate for their subject's natural and probably even unconscious desire both to see himself and have others see his actions in the best historical light. Checks to be applied obviously include both independent testimony, oral as well as written, and real evidence of internal consistency. James MacGregor Burns's recollections of the way in which Colonel "Sam" Marshall inter-

viewed men just after combat in the Pacific are an example:

(The colonel) was very impressed with the old adage that on the day of battle truths lie naked, but soon they put on their uniforms. . . . First we would hear perhaps from a first sergeant or a platoon sergeant who would give an account from his perspective, which might have been a hundred yards back from a particular action, and it would seem so authentic, and like the whole story, and consistent with our documents. And then we would begin to call on the corporals and the privates who would each stand up, and this was very low level. It was who was shooting from that tree, and what tank came over here. What impressed me was how the perspective changed as we moved from actor to actor and got so many perspectives on what looked initially like so simple an action.¹⁷

It is perhaps because Herodotus' interviews were for the most part limited to the equivalent of corporals and privates that his battle accounts are so lacking in overall strategy and tactics and consist so much of whose ship rammed whose and how particular soldiers reacted to the enemy's charge. For even his military inexperience and ignorance of military matters are not sufficient to explain the lack of completeness and overall view in his accounts. But it is true that, since Herodotus was born during the Persian Wars in which his *History* culminates, his inquiries must for the most part have been second- or third- or fourth-hand. He was thus necessarily most often dependent on the hearsay of oral tradition that present-day oral historians prefer to leave to folklorists. And an oral tradition handed down by a people who had won a great victory against overwhelming odds would have been peculiarly subject to embroidery and inflation. From our point of view, however, this was perhaps no bad thing, since it is probable that the popular astonishment and need to explain how the impossible had happened provided the background and incentive for Herodotean inquiry and thus the birth of history.

Whether Herodotus, like present-day oral historians, regularly attempted to check oral sources against written testimony is unclear. One example suggests this possibility; he is writing of the Athenian eviction of certain Pelasgians and says:

Whether they were justified in doing this is not clear; all I can offer are two contradictory accounts, that of the Athenians themselves, on the one side, and of Hecataeus the son of Hegesander on the other. Hecataeus in his book maintains that the Athenians were in the wrong. . . .

And after giving the two accounts Herodotus concludes: "There, then, are the two accounts: that of the Athenians on the one hand, and of Hecataeus on the other."¹⁸ Both sources were at least second-hand, and there was certainly bias on the part of the Athenians in justifying their action, but Herodotus gives *both* equal time and, by refusing to choose between them, suggests the possibility that the written version may have been equally prejudiced, if, for example, Hecataeus or his source had an anti-Athenian bias. But it does happen occasionally that by the lucky chance of a document's preservation *we* can check the result of Herodotus' inquiry against written testimony. So Herodotus reports that the Persian king Darius needed to name his successor and had to decide between the claims of two sons by different mothers—his eldest son and the one who was born to him first after his accession to the throne. Herodotus goes on to tell of the exiled Spartan king who happened to be at the Persian court and advised Darius that in Sparta the law was that in such a case it was the son born to the father after he was king who succeeded. Herodotus' most likely source, whether direct or indirect, for such Spartan influence on the Persian kingship will have been the exiled Spartan king himself, whose boast any self-respecting oral historian would reasonably wish to check. And such a check does exist, for however dubious that assertion of

influence may be, the two sons' conflicting claims which could have given rise to it are confirmed by a surviving Persian inscription in which Xerxes asserts that his father chose him in preference to other sons.¹⁹ It looks as if even an exiled Spartan king of the fifth century B.C. found it more convincing to embroider a kernel of truth than to fashion his suit out of the whole cloth.

In general, of course, we know far more about the ways of present-day oral historians, who are a very vocal lot, than we can even guess about Herodotus' method of inquiry. Without documents *could* he have made the kind of checks for conscious or unconscious bias that oral historians automatically make? Compare what the oral historian Forrest Pogue wrote:²⁰

General Marshall once asked me how I could be sure if what he was telling me in 1957 was not something he had made up recently or that it did not reflect something he thought about only recently. And I said, . . . 'About every tenth question I give you is something to which I already know the answer from your testimony in the 1940s or letters you wrote at this particular time.'

Perhaps an equivalent awareness of how later events might affect the memory of an earlier time is shown by Herodotus when, after reporting an anecdote in which the Persian defeat is predicted before the event, he says "This tale, as I have said, I heard from Thersander of Orchomenus; he also told me that he repeated it soon after to various people before the battle of Plataea."²¹

As for tests of internal consistency, at least in the tradition, Herodotus himself is quick to apply and record them. Three examples show the critical way in which he accepted what was reported to him.

I can not say for certain how it was that Scyllias managed to reach the Greeks, and the commonly accepted account is, at the least, doubtful; for, according to this, he dived under the water at Aphetae and did not come up until he reached

Artemisium—a distance of about ten miles. There are other somewhat tall tales, beside this, told about Scyllias—and also a few true ones; as to the one I have just related, my personal opinion is that he came to Artemisium in a boat.²²

And again:

There are some who maintain that these men who came back from Egypt actually defeated Polycrates; I think, however, that this is unlikely to be true, because if they were strong enough to have dealt with Polycrates unaided, there would have been no need for them to call on the Lacedaemonians for assistance; moreover, it is unreasonable to suppose that a man with so large a paid army and force of native bowmen could be defeated by the exiled Samians, who were but few in number.²³

A third example involves the conflicting versions of two cities concerning the war and hostility between them. In this case Herodotus reports the evidence which each city cites in support of its claim and concludes: "In this conflict of evidence, you may agree with whichever party you think is telling the truth."²⁴

As professionals, oral historians cannot abdicate their responsibility in this way and leave up to the reader the choice between versions which contradict each other. Herodotus, although the Father of History, was little more than an amateur and apparently assumed that just as the telling of different versions results from different interests, so the accepting and believing of one or another may be similarly motivated. Thus, after telling an Athenian story about the Corinthian fleet's treachery in running away from the battle of Salamis, he concludes: "This, as I said, is an Athenian story, and the Corinthians do not admit the truth of it: on the contrary, they believe that their ships played a most distinguished part in the battle—and the rest of Greece gives evidence in their favor."²⁵ Similarly, after reporting that it was the Greek Ephialtes who betrayed to Xerxes the existence of the mountain path which allowed the Persians to take the Greek army

in the rear at Thermopylae, he adds that in another version two other men were charged with the betrayal. But "This is entirely unconvincing, my first criterion being the fact that the Amphictyons, presumably after careful inquiry, set a price not upon these men but upon Ephialtes, and my second, that there is no doubt that the accusation of treachery was the reason for Ephialtes' flight."²⁶ Rather different is the alternate account of the way in which the Persian army provided itself with water when it crossed the Arabian desert: the first account tells how camel-skins were filled with water, loaded on live camels, and thus conveyed into the desert to await the army's coming.

That (he says) at any rate is the more credible account; there is also another, which I ought to mention, though it is not so easy to believe. According to this, the Arabian king had cowhides and other skins stitched together to form a pipe long enough to reach from the Corys river . . . all the way to the desert; here he had large reservoirs constructed, filled them by means of the pipe, and so stored the water. The water was brought to three separate places, over a total distance—between river and desert—of a twelve days' journey.²⁷

Generally indeed Herodotus sees himself not as an arbiter of truth but as a researcher somewhat more interested in what is reported than in exactly what was done. Twice in his *History* he states this explicitly: "Anyone may believe these Egyptian tales, if he is sufficiently credulous; as for myself, I keep to the general plan of this work, which is to record the traditions of the various nations just as I heard them related to me."²⁸ And the second: "My business is to record what people say, but I am by no means bound to believe it—and that may be taken to apply to this work as a whole."²⁹

The oral historians of today are also interested in recording what people say, but the recording is preferably on tape, which is later transcribed and edited; only then does it become the raw material of history. Two

of the guidelines for interviewers adopted by the Oral History Association in 1980 are indicative:

The interviewer should strive to prompt informative dialogue through challenging and perceptive inquiry, should be grounded in the background and experiences of the person being interviewed, and, if possible, should review the sources relating to the interviewee before conducting the interview. Interviewers should extend the inquiry beyond their immediate needs to make each interview as complete as possible for the benefit of others. . . .³⁰

And in addition, in order to get the testimony direct and pure, unfiltered through the mind of the interviewer, the tape recorder is regarded as especially valuable.

The extent to which Herodotus' digestion of the accounts which he elicited changed them in any material way is especially difficult to estimate. It might be thought that the moral point of view which so consistently characterizes all parts of his work is enough to make it likely that he, as it were, homogenized all accounts, no matter what the source, but the testimony of contemporary tragedy suggests that Herodotus was not alone in moralizing thus and that the so-called tragic philosophy of history tells us more about the general climate of opinion in fifth century B.C. Greece than any of the factual material he records. That he was in every way a conscientious reporter and indefatigable in his inquiry is apparent from the way in which he sought out individuals and groups who could add to material he had already collected. So in his account of the settlement of Cyrene he says: "Up to this point the Lacedaemonians and the Theraeans tell the same story; what follows is on the authority of the Theraeans only."³¹ And again later: "I have related the foregoing on the authority of the Theraeans only; for the sequel, the people of Cyrene are in agreement with them."³² So also in recounting the origin of the Scythians he records

first their own story (that they are the youngest of all nations and are descended from Zeus and the river Borysthenes, which Herodotus does not believe), then that of the Black Sea Greeks (that the Scythians were descended from Heracles and a local half-woman-half-snake, about which Herodotus does not comment), and finally, "There is another story which I myself consider the most likely of the three. This relates how the nomadic tribes of Scythians who lived in Asia, being hard pressed by the Massagetae, were forced across the Araxes into . . . what is now Scythia."³³ Stating a preference for one particular version was perhaps as far as it seemed right to Herodotus to go. When we agree with him as we do in the case of the Scythians, we do not feel that he should have given reasons for his preference, but our reaction is different as regards the explanations he gives for the Spartan king Cleomenes' mad suicide:

Most people in Greece think that that was a punishment for having corrupted the Priestess at Delphi and inducing her to say what she did say about Demaratus; the Athenians, however, put it down to his devastating the sacred land of Demeter and Persephone, when he marched to Eleusis; while the Argives maintain that it was a punishment for his sacrilege when, after a battle, he fetched the Argive fugitives from the holy ground of Argos, and cut them to pieces. . . . His own countrymen, however, deny that his madness was a punishment from heaven; they are convinced, on the contrary, that he lost his wits because, in his association with the Scythians, he had acquired the habit of drinking his wine neat. . . . My own opinion is that Cleomenes came to grief as a punishment for what he did to Demaratus.³⁴

Here he follows the majority opinion, less because it was the majority opinion than because he shared the majority need to respect and reverence the oracle and Delphi and so viewed the effort to corrupt it as a most heinous sin.

Comparison between Herodotus and the oral historians is made more difficult because for Herodotus we have only the result of his researches with nothing but speculation as to how he conducted them, whereas with the oral historians the emphasis seems to be more on the techniques of gathering material while the result differs remarkably little from orthodox documentary history. Interviews are used as if they were written documents and as if all the material was somehow to be spun into a single strand of truth. The techniques of interviewing are all-engrossing for many oral historians, as a possible title for a talk proposed by Philip Crowl suggests: "Some Considerations concerning the Care and Handling of Oral History Interviewees, based on my Experience as Director of the John Foster Dulles Project of Princeton University."³⁵ One wonders if Herodotus sometimes entertained his friends with such an inside account of his researches and whether for his Persian War project he had anything like the 279 interviews Crowl can boast or whether he could not even begin to count the number of inquiries he had made over years of research. After all, the sources which he credits for the material which seems to need some guarantee of respectability or for which he does not wish to take responsibility are, with only three exceptions, peoples rather than individuals. It is the Lydians who say this, or the Athenians who say that, or the Persians who say the other thing. What we shall never know is how many individuals are comprised in those ethnic opinions, but the generality of the point of view is somewhat confirmed by the very specialness of the information credited to the individuals in the three exceptions. All three concern matters that would have been known by only one person, or very few, for example: "I myself once met . . . the grandson of this Archias. . . . He told me that his father had been called Samius in memory of his grandfather's heroic death in Samos, and his respect for the Samians was due to the fact

that they had honored his grandfather with a public funeral."³⁶ When a *people* is credited with a story or other material, it is likely, given his readiness to present variant versions, that he is reflecting general agreement, however many people he may have consulted. As to possible numbers, it looks from the anecdotes which he tells concerning the advance of the huge Persian army from Asia into Greece and the local reactions to it all along the way that, as he followed the line of march thirty or forty years later, he talked to individual old-timers as he went and strung their perhaps exaggerated reminiscences together.

So, if we may borrow Levi-Strauss's convenient and picturesque terms for the nature-culture polarization, Herodotus' work is history in the raw while that of the oral historians, like that of the other modern historians, is cooked—that is, natural inquiry or research is contrasted with the cultivated sort. But, although Herodotus' *History* often seems like undigested raw material, there is both an overall design more dependent on cause and effect than on chronology and an insight into the human condition that informs the whole with what is more nearly a mythical truth than a factual truth. For Herodotus' heritage is both oral tradition and a literature of poetry. And although he obviously delights in the particular for its infinite variety, it is the universal aspects of men's lives that fill his pages with patterns. For in both poetry and oral tradition facts take part not only for facts' sake but also because they play a role in the explanation and validation of things as they are, thus helping preserve "what's memorable, noteworthy and representatively human."³⁷

With such a heritage why and how did Herodotus turn to research of the more or less recent events instead of continuing to deal with the heroic past, as we are told his uncle Panyasis did? Partly it was the influence of his older contemporaries who were putting into prose genealogical and geo-

graphical accounts and outlines, and partly it was the climate of philosophical and moral opinion that produced both Attic tragedy and pre-scientific inquiry into the causes of things. It was by combining the factual research of the new prose-writers with the narrative style and story-interest of the older poets and the search for understanding of man and nature carried on by the tragedians and philosophers that Herodotus invented history.

Some insight into the extent to which Herodotus' work was a new departure may be gained by a quick look at one type of subject matter inherited from the past which he shared with contemporary tragedians, that is, myths of the heroic age. Take, for example, the myths of Thebes which are so well known to us from tragedy: Oedipus' patricide, incest and self-blinding; his sons' fratricide, his daughter's suicide; Pentheus' denial of the god Dionysus and murder at the hands of his mother, maddened by the god; Creon's sacrifice of one son and loss of another and his wife by suicide; all these against a background of Cadmean dragon-slaying, teeth-sowing and divine interference. What does Herodotus have to say about Thebes' heroic age and why does it enter into a work which he describes as dealing with the great deeds of Greeks and barbarians and through what cause they came into conflict? In the first place his overriding interest in superlatives of all sorts led him to inquire particularly into first causes and origins. And for these he was often necessarily dependent on that part of oral tradition that led back into myth. So we find him referring to the Theban founder Cadmus' role in the settling of Thera,³⁸ in the importing of the alphabet,³⁹ and in introducing the worship of Dionysus into Greece;⁴⁰ the Theban-born mother of the first two Spartan kings⁴¹ as well as a variety of prehistoric hostilities like the Cadmean eviction of Dorians,⁴² the Argive eviction of Cadmeans,⁴³ and the Athenians' rescue of

Argives fallen at Thebes.⁴⁴ It is perhaps not particularly surprising that one family should exhibit such extremes of destructive and constructive behavior, but Herodotus' complete avoidance of what appeared in the tragic side of the picture is notable. It is not possible that he was ignorant of stories which were part and parcel of what he does record. Nor is it possible that he limited himself to material that would be new to his audience, since at least some of what he does report was surely common knowledge. Even less likely is it that he objected to either tragedy or the seamier side of family life, enjoying as he so obviously does both the dramatic death of Croesus' son⁴⁵ and Xerxes' sordid palace intrigue.⁴⁶ Apparently the principle on which he was operating combined rational credibility with relevance, so that in dealing with prehistoric material he was most likely to take what we call legend and let the more mythic items go.

That traditions from the prehistoric period included both mythical and legendary elements seems to be an almost inevitable consequence of two basic human needs: (1) to understand and reconcile natural forces both without and within; and (2) to establish an identity in space and time. As obverse and reverse of the same coin, myth and legend could use the same personalities, whether divine or human, both as ideal actors on a universal stage and as real figures in particular landscapes. Since the vitality of the tradition would depend on its utility, the proportions of the two elements would for various peoples and various times be different, and the body of myth-legend would be subject to a kind of evolution in which the survival of the fittest meant that men preserved what most satisfied their needs.

As historian, Herodotus gives us insight into what the legend-preserving part of the human mind found important, just as the tragedians, dealing with all kinds of human predicaments, show how what had originated as myths could be used to increase

comprehension and evoke a useful emotional response. Most often, it is likely, Herodotus is recording what he was told and so reflects what must have been the common tendency to substantiate claims to antiquity, territory, primacy, and so on by tracing them back to mythical figures. As a result, by recording for us beliefs current in his day he provides us with the kind of information about his own time that oral historians believe should be gathered today both for current history and the historians of the future. Just as current oral historians have begun to be infected with the folklore germ, so Herodotus seems not to have been very much concerned whether the grist for his mill was mythical-legendary or historical—always providing, of course, that he could use historical criteria of rational credibility and relevance to grind the legendary material to the appropriate consistency. The result was a continuation in prosaic terms of what had long been done in poetic practice, showing how Herodotus justified his diverse inheritance.

The mythical material that oral historians today have to deal with is of a rather different sort—myths in the more modern sense of lies and propaganda. With regard to either kind of myth as told of outstanding personalities one parallel between an oral historian's estimate of Huey Long and Herodotus' evaluation of the Persian king Cyrus is both relevant and revealing; T. Harry Williams writes:

One (myth) is that the Long family was abjectly poor. You see this is everything that's been written about him, that they were abjectly poor. Interestingly, this myth was largely created by Huey himself, partly out of mischief to tantalize northern reporters, partly to let his followers know that although he knew their hard life, he had risen above it.⁴⁷

Herodotus' comment as he was about to launch into a biographical account of Cyrus is: "I could, if I wished, give three versions

of Cyrus's history, all different from what follows; but I propose to base my account on those Persian authorities who seem to tell the simple truth about him without trying to exaggerate his exploits."⁴⁸ Given the Persian kings' habit of ordering monumental inscriptions which describe in laudatory terms their apparently endless conquests and other achievements, Herodotus' scepticism seems reasonable as far as the Persian accounts are concerned. What is more puzzling to us is his designation of the account he does give as the simple truth, since it involves such mythical motifs as cluster variously around great heroes of fact and fiction like Moses, Oedipus, Romulus and Remus: the dream or prophecy of an unborn child's destined power; the fear of that power leading to the exposure of the child; the miraculous rescue of the exposed child, who is sometimes suckled by an animal. Presumably, Herodotus found this version more acceptable and truer as being more familiar, since it was like the patterned kind of stories that he knew from Homer and other early Greek literature and tradition. That such patterned stories were by the very fact of their patterning in large part fiction may be clear to us, but for a fifth-century Greek seeking some semblance of reason and regularity in an apparently haphazard world that same patterning would have seemed to be a satisfying confirmation of order and system. So seeing fictions as truth Herodotus would not have been in a position to know that truth is stranger than fiction, not realizing that what happens by happenstance has no obligation to conform to the human expectations of what is satisfying, right and fitting that govern successful fiction. Today's oral historians, and folklorists as well, have the advantage of centuries of research in both history and literature, so that they can recognize and discount such floating motifs as creep into orally transmitted accounts. But the folklorist Richard Dorson at least would see value in Herodotus' preference, even if

the actual facts of Cyrus' infancy are lost: "What the oral folk historian wishes to record is not the plain unvarnished fact but all the notions, biases, and reactions aroused by the supposed fact, for in them lie the historical perspectives of the folk."⁴⁹

Summing up, we might say that it is in the most primitive sense that Herodotus' *History* is both oral and history. It is most primitively oral in comparison with the tape-recorded interviews of people either involved in or affected by contemporary events in that for lack of written accounts of the past it depends on the collection of hearsay and mouth-to-mouth traditions from people nurtured on myth and in search of order and meaning. (One is reminded here of the modern tendency to formulate conspiracy theories to explain apparently senseless events because of that same human need for, and dependence on, rationality and significance.)

Herodotus' *History* is primitive history in comparison with what is ordinarily thought of as history today in that it was inquiry into anything and everything people might talk about, including the different views that different people might express about the same thing, and not limited to human activity of a political, economic, and military nature. For example, in Herodotus' account of the battle of Salamis a bare six pages are devoted to the battle, and of these more than three are concerned with particular ship-duels or individual exploits, whereas nine pages were taken up with accounts of Xerxes' post-battle intentions, deliberations, messages home with a description of the Persian postal sys-

tem, and his ignominious return from Greece, complete with the life-history of his top eunuch. This proportion of military to personal and incidental subject matter gives insight into both what Herodotus considered important, interesting and relevant and what his audience may have been eager for.

Not only did that audience find satisfaction in Herodotus' choice and presentation of material, but readers have continued for 2,400 years to find pleasure in, as well as finding fault with, the ways in which he went about inventing history. His methods of inquiry were dictated by the force of circumstance, and beginning with his most immediate successor, Thucydides, the effort to improve on the scope, accuracy and factual nature of his account—its historicity, in fact—has given us such great works as Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and Carlyle's *French Revolution*.

The recent return of oral historians to some of Herodotus' methods and subjects seems to stem in part from gaps in documentation but even more perhaps from the twentieth-century combination of personality cult and concern for the common man. Whether the works of these oral historians will achieve Herodotus' longevity seems unlikely but that may depend less on their intrinsic worth than on some failure in the process of man's perfectability. At all events, the relation of today's Oral History to Herodotus' original version was unconsciously characterized by William Leuchtenburg's flippant comment on the new technique: "It's very useful, but it's not the Second Coming."⁵⁰

NOTES

1. Benjamin Franklin, "A Proposal for Promoting Useful Knowledge among the British Plantations in America," *American Philosophical Society Year Book* 1981, p. 12.
2. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, edited by Leonard W. Labaree (1970), vol. 4, p. 243.
3. *Op cit.*, vol. 14, pp. 212-213; cf. also vol. 11, p. 522.
4. *First National Colloquium on Oral History*, Lake Arrowhead, California, 1966, p. 2.
5. Herodotus i.53.3.
6. *Selections from the Fifth and Sixth National Colloquia on Oral History* (1972) pp. 40-42.
7. Herodotus ii.99-182.
8. Herodotus ii.93.3.
9. Herodotus ii.17-27.
10. Herodotus ii.66-70.
11. "Research in Contemporary Events for the Writing of History," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters*, Second series no. 22 (1972) p. 62.

12. *The Ruines of Time*, lines 400–404.
13. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, vol. 20, s.v. Oral History, p. 458.
14. "Oral History. A Personal View" in Edwin Clarke, *Modern Methods in the History of Medicine* (1971) pp. 286–305.
15. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, vol. 20, s.v. Oral History, p. 454.
16. William E. Leuchtenburg in *The Second National Colloquium on Oral History* (1968), p. 3.
17. *Selections from the Fifth and Sixth National Colloquia on Oral History* (1972), p. 26.
18. Herodotus vi.137. All passages quoted from Herodotus are taken from the translation of Aubrey de Selincourt (Penguin Classics).
19. Herodotus vii-1–4; R. G. Kent, *Old Persian* (1950), p. 163.
20. *Selections from the Fifth and Sixth National Colloquia on Oral History* (1972) p. 37.
21. Herodotus ix.16.5.
22. Hdt. viii.8.3.
23. Hdt. iii.45.3.
24. Hdt. v.45.
25. Hdt. viii.94.
26. Hdt. vii.213.
27. Hdt. iii.9.
28. Hdt. ii.123.1.
29. Hdt. vii.152.3.
30. *The Oral History Review* 1980, p. 8.
31. Hdt. iv.150.1.
32. Hdt. iv.154.
33. Hdt. iv.5–12.
34. Hdt. vi.75–84.
35. *The Second National Colloquium on Oral History* (1968), p. 73.
36. Hdt. iii.55.2.
37. *The Oral History Review* 1981, p. 2.
38. Hdt. iv.145.
39. Hdt. v.57.
40. Hdt. ii.49.
41. Hdt. vi.52.
42. Hdt. i.56.
43. Hdt. v.61.
44. Hdt. ix.2.
45. Hdt. i.34–45.
46. Hdt. ix.108–111.
47. *Selections from the Fifth and Sixth National Colloquia on Oral History* (1972), p. 26.
48. Hdt. i.95.
49. *Selections from the Fifth and Sixth National Colloquia on Oral History* (1972), p. 48.
50. *The Second National Colloquium on Oral History* (1968), p. 5.



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NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE *HISTORIES OF HERODOTUS*

DONALD LATEINER

I. Nonverbal communication: Introduction

IA. Nature and Scope of Subject

Nonverbal communication supplies subject matter for psychology, linguistics, folklore, and literature. Informative and *affective* movements and nonverbal sounds vary according to gender, age, and social status as well as epoch, geography, and ethnic background. The more elemental and unmediated phenomena of body language and paralanguage still have few labels and no adequate taxonomy. Conscious and unconscious body movements, postures, and socialized gesture (including manners and customs) must be studied along with vocal but nonverbal phenomena including interjections, modifications of the voice in tone, and volume. The relatively new field, unexplored by classicists and ancient historians in a systematic way, encompasses acoustic, visual, olfactory, tactile, and gustatory signals. Social scientists in kinesics, proxemics (animal use of social distance), chronemics (duration of communication, frequency) have begun the task, although without a common method.

Categorization proceeds along several lines: by parts of the body employed (hand, head, lips); by activities involved (rituals of funerals and court etiquette; involuntary psychophysical responses such as blushing and startle-reflexes; occupational postures such as bending over a potter's wheel); by the significance of the signal (insult, grief, joy, fear); by whether the signal purports to illustrate or replace a verbal statement (mimicking a thirsty drinker as opposed to winking); by dividing such communication into formalized conventions and spontaneous reactions (prayer gestures or a cry of surprise, e.g.).

In ordinary human relations, the sender and receiver of a signal are mutually implicated, but for science and literature, the student observes and remains at a distance. The inclusion in literature of actions and sounds that accompanied or replaced statements or necessary actions represents an artistic decision about the nature of the representation of human events. Affect displays, the nonverbal expressions of emotion, are essential to social intercourse to convey shades of meaning, but they resist verbal description as well as analysis. The externalization of emotion through numerous simultaneous signals that we all employ in daily life suffers severe curtailment in literature.¹

Description of cues and behavior delays any narration concerning emotional stress, exactly the moments most imbued with nonverbal signals. Consequently the cues that shape our response to conversation or events in everyday life are often transmitted in literature by a single word or phrase: "Artabanus shrieked and jumped out of bed." "Odysseus let a tear fall." Graphic transcription, the encoding of the paralinguistic variety of query, growl, shock and so forth has not advanced beyond the question mark, exclamation point, italics, and marks of ellipsis. Nevertheless, semiotic supplements, intentional gestures and spontaneous physical reactions are too helpful for mimetic accounts to dispense with entirely. We proceed to examine the practice of Homer (briefly) and the historians with respect to nonverbal communication.

IB: Homer

Homer's poetry provided Herodotus with his only model of narrative sustained over many volumes. Both authors, unlike the tragedians and other writers who composed for mimetic performance, required resources for expressing states of being beyond the report of intentional action and conscious communication. The literary and

A special bibliography on nonverbal communication appears at the end of this essay. References to this specialized bibliography, as distinct from the general bibliography at the end of this volume, are marked with an asterisk (*).

¹ *Malandro and Barker 1983 provide a recent introductory textbook; *La Barre 1980 reviews developments in the field. For proxemics, see *ibid.*, 317 and 331-2, nn. 54-9, and *Hall 1966. Additional factors such as duration, spatial relationship and context must always be factored in. Obviously many gestures of greeting and farewell are too trivial for even the novelist, *a fortiori* the historian.

intellectual constraints that affected Homer in conveying information about emotions were quite different and less limiting than a historian's, yet both authors chose to present a minimum of psychological analysis but a generous portion of behavior description (conscious and unconscious), gestures, revealing actions and sounds.² From Achilles' eloquent flinging down of the sceptre in assembly to Penelope's long-delayed, tearful embrace and kiss on the head of Odysseus, objects, limbs, and sounds are marshalled in order to show character and emotion in action, to convey the spirit without the mediation of speech, to make speech visible.

Homer's poems are rich in the ritualized gestures of sacrifice, prayer, and supplication, rich in informal gestures such as embraces and clinging; rich also in psychophysical messages such as swooning, belching, and sneezing as well as subconscious gesticulation and sounds illustrative of emotional condition such as cringing, lip-biting, and cries of anger. Another form of nonverbal communication, more deliberate than the above, is the use of tokens, symbolic objects, and clothing to convey clear and meaningful signals between parties. Examples include gift exchanges, prizes, Odysseus' bow and bed. An incomplete inventory of nonverbal communication accompanies this paper (Appendix I), but it may be helpful to offer examples from each category.

1. Ritualized gestures, conventionalized social behaviors, include all the scenes of mourning and burial, prayer, divine and human earnest requests, diplomatic protocols, ferocious imprecations, but also indicators of life in less catastrophic times such as dancing, feasting, farming, hunting, and gift-giving.³ The many social and economic rituals pictured on Achilles' shield remind the reader of the world left behind or destroyed. Often tradition and ceremony are given heightened significance by being reserved for description at a critical moment (Achaean assembly, Achilles' grief for Patroclus, Trojan mourning). Often the formal event is reinvigorated by the transcendent experience of the individual (Achilles' parlay in IX, mourning in XIX, exchange of objects in XXIV).

² Only *Sittl 1890 has attempted a comprehensive account of gesture in Greek and Roman literature and art. *Gruber 1980 provides a modern account of more limited scope for the ancient Near East. *Taplin 1978, ch. 5, surveys the use of gestures in drama.

³ Consult *Gould 1973 and *Pedrick 1982 for details of religious ritual; *Kakridis 1949.67-75, and *Alexiou 1974.6 for caressing the head of the deceased.

2. Informal (but voluntary and personal) gestures, postures and sounds include stroking, nodding, thigh-slapping, awestruck gazing, growling, bowing one's head, and maintaining a distance. The savage and pitiless mutilation of the living and the dead by Achilles establishes most clearly Homer's vision of the brutality of war. *Iliad* 22 describes in grotesque detail the gestures of the butcher Achilles and his pitiful opponents. The similes drawn from nature, from speechless animals and elements echo the pathos of a world in which words don't work. When the suitor hurls a stool or an ox-hoof at beggar Odysseus, the extreme of Zeus-hated incivility is marked by the gestural insult. The mutilation of Melanthius after his execution, symbolic justice, was justified by the extent and nature of his depravity.⁴

3. Involuntary body language is reported less frequently but often with extraordinary effect, at a moment of crisis or climax, when the action speaks louder than words. Thus when the Cyclops belches or the suitors laugh hysterically, their loss of physical self-control, indicative of their loss of proper values, symbolizes their incipient transit from malefactors to victims, from agents to passive subjects.

Levine has thoroughly examined the structural use of laughter, smiles, and tears in the *Odyssey*. Both heroes and villains can laugh, but only the good guys ever smile. Their smiles can convey affection, a conciliatory spirit, or an awareness of superior knowledge or power (often anticipating a wished-for outcome, especially the downfall of the suitors). His thesis is that the significant gesture concentrates converging themes, here the suitors' immoral obsession with their own pleasures and their infatuation, as well as Odysseus' growing anger and increasing confidence that he will be able to punish those who have offended the gods, himself, and his house. The hysterical laughter of the suitors at Theoclymenus' prophecy caps all the earlier signals (and is accompanied by dire portents, divine nonverbal communication), providing a pivot for the plot: it sums up their earlier crimes and looks toward their condign punishment.

4. Subconscious gesticulation is reported when bodies writhe in anxiety, or shrink away from danger or groan in pain, sigh in sorrow, scowl in anger. Andromache's tears and the suitors' lip-biting belong in this category of "giving oneself away."

⁴ Consult *Lowenstam 1981 for thigh-slapping; *Colakis 1986 and *Levine 1982/3 *passim* for laughter, smiles, and tears; *Russo 1985 for Odysseus' spatial relationships to the suitors, Penelope, etc.

5. The last category, objects and tokens, depends on the association of externals with an individual or group. The foul clothing of Laertes and beggar Odysseus are potent symbols of their current state, and the gift-exchanges which, depending on context, can convey ransom-payment, recompense for social offense, prize for excellence or respectful affection for an equal, are tokens, object means of communication. Less frequent but no less eloquent are the sceptre as token of authority, Odysseus' scar as a proof of identity, the *Odyssey's* marriage bed as a riddling object, and the *sēmata lugra* which might refer to the written word but are as likely to refer to a rebus or code of a different type.

To summarize, Homer utilizes nonverbal communication to make the invisible visible, to express personal experience in a mode that complements or comments on the words of a character. Frequency seems greatest in those books where emotion runs strongest, e.g., *Iliad* I, IX, XIX, XXII, XXIV; *Odyssey* XVII-XXIII. Nonverbal communication underlines the critical moment and provides speedy access to emotional states. It is another language.

II. Nonverbal communication in historiography

IIA. Introduction

The gestures, bodily movements, inarticulate shouts, and groans found in epic, drama, and fiction have been judged alien to historiography in antiquity and now. Historical prose chiefly consists of narratives of actions, reports of speech and plans, and a historian's reflective analyses. Cries and head-hiding are significant indexes of human experience, but because they seem too trivial in their consequences or too fleeting to be recorded, history generally ignores them. They offer a technique of description that engages one's sympathies; they offer a technique of persuasion that does not rely solely on argument; they offer psychological insight without evidence. All of these factors render them suspect, which is not to say that historians do not find ways to suggest the inner life of their subjects.

Part of this art consists of recognizing patterns in human friction and cohesion, directing attention to the events that matter, selectivity in subject and in presentation that can omit the irrelevant background noise. Herodotus' desire for inclusiveness led him to signal emphasis rather than omit interesting data. The vital moment

in a story can be indicated by a meaningful gesture or nonverbal sound. The bound or shriek concentrates the audience's attention, escalates the emotional intensity.

The historical writer combines his search for accurate data with intelligibility and persuasiveness, for he will only be heard if he responds to his audience's concerns and expectations (literary and intellectual). That is to say, he must recognize, if not share, some of the beliefs and prejudices of his public. Nevertheless, he will be useful only if he disagrees with some of their received opinions, if he develops an expanded sympathy for other points of view that renders his work both irritating and stimulating. His success in this revisionist task is more a question of art than of scientific method. He frames his insights in familiar values; he makes alien thoughts and actions comprehensible by using known languages, words and gestures.

IIB: Herodotus

Studies of Herodotus' literary skill have not examined his manner of conveying meaning or supplementing verbal records by means of the description of nonverbal behaviors. This lacuna, which exists for all ancient authors, cannot be explained by lack of material or significance, but rather by the absence of an adequate mode of literary analysis, even vocabulary, for the study of paralinguistic and kinetic manifestations in literature. Furthermore, because this facet of Herodotus' technique seems literary if not anti-historical by nature, students of historiography tend to lump it in with his penchant for folktales and fiction. A brief essay cannot supply the exhaustive taxonomy or the theory that sufficiently explains why, when and how every author avails himself of this second language. Rather I intend to substantiate the variety of Herodotus' methods of conveying meaning by nonverbal communication and to explore the significance of this aspect of his historiographical art.

Herodotus' "demonstration" of his research encompasses body language; it offers a variety of types of information as well as rhetorical and fictional enticements. His technique encompasses all the methods of literary communication that Greek literature had developed for narration, in a period before distinctions among literary genres had ossified, before Thucydides decreed the exile of *to mythōdes*. Nonverbal communication, reported with detail as if from eyewitnesses, dramatically reveals thought, emotion, and action in the

History when report of speech and intended deed is deemed inadequate. Especially when suffering goes beyond what is humanly endurable, a gesture can provide an emotional outlet for the person concerned and a strong signal to the reader. Herodotus, like Homer, prefers to show by actions rather than analyze character through psychologizing. The oblique manner and paradigms of behavior promote persuasion. Even more commonly, Herodotus presents nonverbal communication as a significant part of the *nomoi* or customs that he deems indicative of his subjects' way of life.

IIC: Thucydides

This aspect of Herodotus' historiographical art was scorned, however, by his more serious successors, following Thucydides who deliberately divided his subject into *erga* and *logoi* of politicians and political groups at war (1.22). From his theory in this controversial chapter and from his practice everywhere, it is tolerably clear that Thucydides has in mind *deliberated* actions and arguments, as opposed to psychological and emotional frailty and unconsidered self-revelation. Speeches present the arguments deemed necessary for the issue (*tōn aiei parontōn ta deonta*), actions provide the policies carried out or the circumstances created by the policies of others. Recent critics have rightly stressed Thucydides' concern for unforeseen consequences of political choices and military campaigns, for unforeseeable disasters such as plague and quake, and for the frightful extent and severity of human suffering,⁵ but these contradictions of expectation appear in the Athenian author as constraints on rational policy, and they are thus less often his focus than effective attempts to shape and control the lives of others.

Thucydides mentions tears twice, laughter thrice, and one groan;⁶ never does he record a smile, self-mutilation (such as Cleomenes'), or an obscene gesture. Speech fails only one man in Thucydides' text, a herald — whose *raison d'être* is to speak. When this individual suddenly realizes the unparalleled magnitude of his city's catastrophic loss of men (3.113.5), his lack of *logos* indicates a dra-

⁵ See, e.g., Stahl 1966.133-40, Kitto 1966.270-4, Edmunds 1975, Lateiner 1977a, Rawlings 1981, and most recently Connor 1984, esp. 31-2, 149-51, 206-9, 232-3.

⁶ Thuc. 7.75.4 (bis), 3.83.1, 4.28.5, 6.35; 3.113.5, 7.71.3-4 and 75.4 refer to lamentation, a more common subject in Thucydides.

matic *anagnōrisis*, pathos rarely matched in the historian's more usual detached manner. The swaying bodies, groans, and cheers of the Athenians on shore watching the final battle in the harbor of Syracuse is another rule-proving exception (7.71.3) that emphasizes pathos and helplessness. These choral echoes of climactic actions probably seem part of the *mythōdes* (1.22.4) that Thucydides objected to in his predecessors, but when the significance of a historical fact resides in mass suffering rather than acting, the historian's options for analyzing the decision-making process become more limited. The clumsy phrase *ta d'erga tōn prachthentōn* underscores human agency; *pathos*, *pathē*, and *pathēmata* emphasize human unwilling involvement. The "fiction-like quality" of Herodotus' narrative consists not least in the report of sounds and gestures unlikely to have found an immediate recorder.

Herodotus, *per contra*, articulates his subject not as speeches and actions of men at war, but human events and beliefs (*ta genomena ex anthrōpōn*) and Greek and barbarian actions (*erga*), particularly the cause of their war but including all the rest (*ta te alla*) that distinguishes them. The inclusiveness of this last phrase (aside from its idiomatic nature) and the use of *genomena* deemphasize agency or policy in favor of comprehending all human action, traditional custom and innovative reasoning, group and individual business, active and passive experience.

III. Categories of nonverbal communication in Herodotus

Herodotus' deployment of nonverbal communication goes well beyond expressive, conscious gestures such as gaze-aversion and slumping in despair, and beyond spontaneous body signals such as laughing, sobbing, and shrieking. He includes clothes, titles, and other cultural differentiators, dumb shows, manual sign languages, symbolic actions, and objects or tokens that are meant to convey a unique, dramatic message or an ethnographic convention.

We may survey the variety of nonverbal communication in Herodotus under five rubrics and briefly explore some examples in each. The second appendix provides these rubrics: 1. ritualized social conventions; 2. informal, voluntary gestures, postures and sounds; 3. psychophysical (unconscious) reactions; 4. subconscious gesticulation and sound and, finally, 5. objects and tokens.

1. Ritualized social conventions provide the first classification. Herodotus recorded the habits and customs, verbal and non-

verbal, of the ethnic groups that he includes. Unspontaneous but characteristic gestures and rituals of the peoples involved in the conflict that he commemorated provide both indexes of their civilization and items that define the Hellenes by isolating their differences. Herodotus mentions that Persians kiss equals on the lips, subordinates on the cheeks, while inferiors must prostrate themselves (1.134.1). The historian's well known interest in barbarian and Hellenic *nomoi* does not provide mere anthropological diversion for his narrative; it offers a dimension, often nonverbal, to his analysis of significant difference, cultural discriminators that indicate or symbolize the fruitfulness of Greek variety and adaptability, and the strength engendered by the weak political organization of the Greeks.

Not least these folkways illustrate his principle that "*nomos* is king of all" (3.38). The author castigates his fellow Hellenes for parochial ignorance and self-satisfaction (e.g., 2.45.1-2). No Egyptian man or woman will kiss a Greek on the lips, because their eating of sacred flesh renders them unclean (2.41.3). Difference here and elsewhere does not always make the Greeks look superior. He mentions the mourning procedures of the Egyptians, Thracians, Scythians, as well as of the Spartans, the marriage customs of the Lydians and Babylonians, the places where Persians will not spit or piss or wash their hands (in rivers especially, as a sign of reverence), and the astonishing variety of amusements, eating-habits and prized accomplishments to be found in the world (2.40.4, 85.1; 4.34.1, 71; 5.4.2, 8; 6.58.3; 1.93.4, 196; 1.138.2; cf. 2.172.4).

Herodotus' interest in social hierarchies led him to include such conventions as young Spartans and Egyptians yielding place to older ones in the street or standing when their elders enter. Greetings are given their due: Egyptians bow low (*proskyneousi*) and place one hand on a knee, but do not mention each other's name (2.80; cf. 1.134.1). Spartan kings have seats of honor and double portions of food, etc. (6.56-7).

Herodotus associates the protocols, the elaborate titles and gestures of politesse with oriental, centralized autocracies. At court, rules of deference are multiplied: Deioces once in power prohibited spitting and laughing in his palace or even his being seen by his subjects; Darius established procedures for the visits of even his fellow junta members; Xerxes expected that Greeks would show that Persian symbolic gesture of respect, *proskynesis* or kowtowing, unacceptable to the Greeks because of its different meaning, divine veneration

(1.99.1, 3.118, 7.136.1). When the Spartan heralds refuse to genuflect before the King of Kings, the incident exemplifies not lack of manners, discourtesy or ignorance of hierarchical deference cues, but self-respect, subordination to an idea greater than a man, and the clash of fundamental *nomoi*. Whipping is almost always associated with the Persian King (e.g., 3.16.1, 157.1; 7.22.1, 54.3, 56.1, 103.4*, 223.3).

One extremely public and permanent form of nonverbal communication practiced by potentates consists of permanently disfiguring a human body or its undamaged image to warn, to humiliate, or to punish. Mutilation of a human body, a prominent motif in Homer also,⁷ is presented as “barbaric” in its pejorative sense by Herodotus, but he does not limit us to a unilateral vision of such practices. The examples also embody alien concepts and practices of government and justice, and he takes them seriously as another view of social and political organization.

The Greek despot Pheretime hacked off the breasts of her enemies’ wives and impaled them publicly; Persian Amestris sliced off Masistes’ wife’s nose, ears, lips and tongue. The reported Persian punishments by mutilation provide insults more painful than mere killing. Mutilation generally appears as a royal prerogative: when Intaphrenes treated Darius’ chamberlain this way, the King suspected rebellion, a threat to his power (4.202.1, 9.112, 3.118.2).

When Cambyzes abused Amasis’ corpse by having it lashed, punctured, plucked, and burned, and when Xerxes decapitated Leonidas’ corpse at Thermopylae, Herodotus underlines the repugnant cruelty, the lack of self-control shown by autocrats (3.16; cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.10.1, 3.1.17, 7.238). Elsewhere he points out that the Persians as a nation honor brave opponents, dead and alive, and Pausanias of Sparta, when encouraged to take a similar revenge on Mardonius’ corpse, refused (7.238.2, 181; 9.79). Abuse of the dead marked the beginning as well as the end of Xerxes’ march into central Greece, for when his marshalled army had set out, he had the halved son of the Lydian Pytheas nailed up “to encourage the others” (7.39.3). Here nonverbal communication symbolizes, for Herodotus, the inhumanity of despots.⁸ To be sure, the despot perceives it differently;

⁷ *Segal 1971.10-13. Homer condemns atrocities: *ibid.* 12-15.

⁸ Zopyrus hacked off his own nose and ears, had himself whipped dreadfully, and shaved his head in order to appear punished by his monarch (3.154.2, *anēkeston*).

for him, the act represents justice, misbehavior punished and the populace educated.

Autocratic gesture reaches its nadir not when poor human flesh is chopped up, but when Pharaoh Pheros is reported as having speared the Nile in spate and Xerxes lashes the Hellespont (2.111.2, 7.35.1-2). Here gestures record insane, or at the least, sacrilegious departure from recognized *nomos*, for both Egyptians and Persians are marked in the *Histories* by their worship of water.

2. Informal but voluntary nonverbal communication provides the second rubric. These sounds and gestures are the most common form of body language and paralanguage in modern fiction, and they are not rare in Homer where people many a time embrace, glance darkly, push away, or shout. Herodotus, however, employs them less frequently, most often in a tale where the interest in personality has outrun the information about the historical circumstances. Extreme sorrow will be portrayed as if on a stage, by the description of the gestures and sounds of grief. The isolation of Croesus when defeated is marked by his intentional silence (1.86.3, 4; 88.1). King Astyages is speechless in his troubled meditation (1.116.2) about the boy Cyrus. Demaratus retreats to total passivity; he wordlessly covers himself up to avoid being seen (6.67.3). Thus Herodotus gives outward form to an inward state. The extreme case is suicide, in which the functional act conveys in addition a message of incurable despair, for instance Adrastus, Cleomenes, Pantites the Spartan. For these men, doing something is better than talking about it.

Gestures also communicate self-confidence and scorn. Contemptuous insult, in particular, appears through gestures, exclamations, and rude noises. The soldiers of Pharaoh Psammetichus think so little of his order that they return to his service and their Egyptian

Zopyrus' injuries represent, of course, the normal way that Persian Kings punished serious miscreants: such mutilations were a reminder to others of the cost of disobedience. The irreversible disfigurement seemed to provide incontestable proof, unlike mere words, of Zopyrus' trustworthiness to the Babylonian enemies of Darius. The drastic self-sacrifice marks both the Persian's fanatical devotion to his monarch and the limiting case of the untrustworthiness of human messages. No guarantee against deception is sufficient, as an ironic *dēthen* makes clear (3.156.1: *hōs dēthen alētheōs automolos*). Cleomenes' hacking himself to death was understood by some as a divine punishment (6.75.3, 84). The savage judicial penalty exacted for Evenius' dereliction of his herding duties, blinding, was followed by the compensatory desolation of Apollonia (9.93.2).

families that “one of them is said to have pointed to his penis and said ‘wherever this should be, there too will be [new] wives and children’” (2.30.4). Amasis the rebel, when ordered by an honored courtier of Pharaoh Apries to surrender, “raised himself on his horse and farted and told Patarbemis to take *that* back to Pharaoh” (2.162.3). A similarly dismissive retort was given by the King of the Scyths to the emissary of Darius (4.127.4*): “My response to your claim that you are my master: I say ‘Go howl.’” That is, the proposition deserved no rational argument, only derisive advice to make meaningless noise.

Rubric 3, involuntary nonverbal communication, presents a relatively insignificant category in the historians. Herodotus employs it mainly to portray certifiable insane acts and panic on the battlefield (e.g., Cambyzes’ behavior in Egypt and the Persian troops frightened at Delphi). Characters in the *Histories* rarely experience physical symptoms. Hippias uniquely coughs and sneezes (6.107.3); the uncontrollable act finds record because he himself interprets it as portentous. The description of such symptoms, common in modern fiction and not rare in Homer, has little place in the *Histories*, perhaps because it does not reveal personality or culture, only the *pathos* of the human condition, the frailty of the body. So Homer recorded the swoon of the heartbroken wife, a grimace of pain, helpless belching, and the twitching feet in death-throes.

4. Semi-conscious gesticulation and sound: More prominent than involuntary body twitchings are those significant expressions of internal states by body or voice that indicate extreme emotion rather than calm choice. Men groan in frustration at their previous foolishness or at the failure of their dearest plans. Croesus groans in his grief, as do Hippias and Cleomenes (1.86.3, 2.175.5, 6.107.4, 6.80; cf. 7.159). Gyges exclaims in horror at Candaules’ proposal, Psammenitus at an old nobleman’s extreme penury, Darius when he sees the mutilation of Zopyrus, and the Indian wise men at the thought of burning (rather than eating) their dead relatives (1.8.3, 3.14.9, 3.155.1, 3.38.4). Grief also leads frequently to wailing; examples include Cambyzes, Psammenitus, and the wife of Intaphrenes (2.64.2 [bis], 3.65.7, 3.14.9, 3.119.3). Tearful crying often accompanies the emotional state as with Croesus, Spaco the wife of Mitrdates, Cambyzes’ wife and Psammenitus (1.87.2, 1.112.1, 3.32.2 [ter]. 3.14.2). Rational discourse has collapsed.

Tears of more than fictional significance underline Xerxes’ momentary recognition of Solon and Herodotus’ cycle of fortune

(1.32*, 1.5.4, 1.207.2*): after a moment of delight in his power, he breaks down sobbing (7.45–46.1 [ter]). The tears of things appear also for the Persians at the Orchomenian banquet preceding the battle of Plataea (9.16.3). The only conceivably verifiable tears are those that the Athenians shed after Phrynichus' disturbing dramatic portrayal of the *Capture of Miletus* (6.21.2). Weeping is a convenient literary shorthand for helpless inaction and suffering. These gestures reveal pain but, more pointedly, painfully won insight. They demarcate the transgression of human expectation and the unasked-for gift of wisdom concerning the transiency of human happiness. When violent emotion transcends verbal response, Herodotus borrows the techniques of epic and drama. Victims endure with vocal nonverbal reactions or with meaningful silence. Croesus on the pyre remembers and appreciates Solon's words; he sighs, moans, and cries out Solon's name. When the truth hits (*etypse*) Cambyses, he cries out in vain (1.86.3; 3.64.1, 65.7).

Laughter and smiles in Herodotus suggest not innocent pleasure and benign joy, but arrogance and self-delusion. This nonverbal response is mobilized to reveal to the reader a character's self-destructive tendencies. The facial rictus attended by explosive sounds will generally be ascribed only to men too blind, too self-assured and too powerful for human security.⁹ Herodotus expresses a profound sense of dislocation by these inappropriate nonverbal responses.

5. Object and Tokens. Speechless communication includes the use of "adapters," objects outside the body that convey a message. This last category fills the text of Herodotus: monuments public and private, gifts, human symbols, whether created at a historical moment or customary, and portents.¹⁰ Here one may also consider hairstyles, clothing, and gifts. I shall discuss this set in greater detail.

⁹ Cf. Marg 1953.1106, Lateiner 1977, Flory 1978 on laughter. Baby Cypselus, the righteous Ethiopian king, Cleisthenes of Sicyon, righteous Pausanias, and Herodotus laugh without penalty, in innocence or metaphorically: 5.92.3*, 3.22.2, 5.68.1, 9.82.3, 4.36.2. On excessive good fortune, see De Heer 1969.67, 71, de Romilly 1971.318, 328, Legrande 1932.84–88, 133–35, and Lateiner 1982.

¹⁰ The divine signal system, comprising portents, oracles, dreams, prodigies, and so forth may transmit messages to man from the supernatural realm. See Crahay 1956, Fontenrose 1978 (esp. 116–19, 122–8, 233–7), and Frisch 1968 (sixteen dreams discussed by categories). Herodotus has a mixed set of responses to these historical data, but the topic is too large for this discussion (see my book, forever forthcoming).

The historian mentions hundreds of historical monuments for a variety of reasons.¹¹ First of all, secular and religious, private and public structures testify to the past. Temples, shrines and divine images crystallize systems of belief. Statues, tombs, and trophies attested to the achievements of men now dead. A second motive for detailing still visible reminders of the past was the author's pleasure in seeing for himself, autopsy: amidst the variable and shifting world of *logoi*, men's accounts of the past, physical monuments provided a resting-place, a "proof" of the past. The evidence is recognized as not always trustworthy, by us more often than by Herodotus, but that objects can and will witness to past events made their inclusion desirable. Thirdly, the writers of ethnography, geography and mythography, Herodotus' prose predecessors, dilated on such visible records of the past, and Herodotus wanted to show his superior *historiē*. Finally, sheer size, costly materials, and curious shapes fulfilled *one* of Herodotus' criteria for *erga megala te kai thōmasta*.

This world of articulate objects may be studied from Appendix II. It includes the chains that the Tegeans exhibited for their victory over the Spartans, the chains that the Athenians hung up on their acropolis to commemorate victory over the Boeotians, and the bowl at Exampaeus that indicated by its size the population of Scythia. The visible monument commemorates the historical action; each one emphasizes the primacy of *opsis*: Darius' first act as king (the erection of a monument to his clever groom), the pillars that he erected at Byzantium and on the Tearus, the statues of Cleobis and Biton, the

ing . . .). Furthermore it is marginal to the announced topic of *ta genomena ex anthrōpōn* and belongs more to the theological than the anthropological dimension of Herodotus.

¹¹ Cook 1976.29, Müller 1981, on Herodotus' empirical impulses; Raubitschek 1939 discusses which monuments were included. Boedeker examines hero cult in Herodotus in a forthcoming study. On occasion, nonverbal communication passes without comment. Certainly Aristagoras' map tells Cleomenes all that he wishes to know about whether to help the Ionians (5.49-50). An interesting subcategory is provided by monuments either meant to mislead or commonly misinterpreted by posterity. Under the former head appear Xerxes' diminution of the heap of the Persian dead at Thermopylae, some Greek cities' empty tombs on the field of Plataea, and the statue of Amasis (8.24-25.2; 9.85; 2.172). Under the latter head appear the pillars of Sesostris (cf. West 1985.298-301), the handless female statues at Sais, the pyramid of "Rhodopis," and the temple allegedly built by Dorieus (2.106, 130-1, 134-5; 5.45). See Dewald 1985.54.

one that Amasis had made, the tripod with snakes that commemorated the Hellenic victory, bronze statues of Zeus and Poseidon, Xerxes' tent converted into a lesson, the graves and monuments for the dead of Lacedaemon, Tegea, Athens, Megara and Phlius erected at Plataea, as well as the false commemorative barrows at that site (1.66.4, 5.77.3, 4.81.3, 3.88.3, 4.87.1, 4.91.1, 1.31.5, 2.172, 9.81.1, 9.82, 9.85.1-2 and 3). Private dedications are also mentioned, for instance those of Mandrocles and Rhodopis (4.88.1, 2.135). Monuments thus can reveal values, wealth, power, and even social structure, as when prostitutes are credited with monuments of particular magnificence (Lydia: 1.93).

Object communication generally employs conventionalized signals: raising and lowering the national flag, use of a white flag, black weeds for mourning. Animals represent highly marked qualities such as Semonides' animal women, our skunk and snake, the North American Indians' coyote. The messages may be clear within a culture but incomprehensible outside it.

The insignia of a group, their totems, tools, prizes, military equipment and uniforms, draw the historian's attention in his attempt to distinguish in all possible dimensions between West and East. His elaborate descriptions of the dress and weaponry of the various barbarian and Hellenic contingents may at first seem functional and in the ordinary mode of historians, but aside from the Homeric element in the catalogues (7.61-95; *Iliad* 2.484 ff.), the description of outlandish gear on parade underlines the alien quality of the enemy, much as the Persian report of the Greeks contending not for gold but for a crown of olive symbolizes the alien quality of the Greeks for the Persians (8.26; cf. 1.167.2, 5.22.2). Games, like clothes, are a codification of collective values. The same function may be applied to war trophies such as the scalps that the Scythians take (4.68). Hair has many uses, magical and symbolic. It can function in a synecdochic manner (*pars pro toto*) or as an indicator of intensified emotions.

The people of Miletus mourned the fall of Sybaris by shaving their heads (6.21.1). After the defeat at Salamis, the Persians back home rent their garments in anxiety and grief (8.99.2). After the Aeginetans defeated the Athenians, the women of Athens were compelled to change to Ionian dress and to abandon (as too lethal) the type of brooch that they had favored for holding up their garments. The women of Aegina, *per contra*, henceforth fastened their garments with longer brooch-pins. Since the Spartans defeated the Argives at the

battle of Thyrea, they wear their hair long to commemorate the victory; the Argives cut theirs short (5.87-88; 1.82.7-8). These social consequences of historical events present historical data, not emotional signals. The transient becomes permanent.

Herodotus reports some symbolic objects of archaic diplomacy. As is well known, the Persians demanded earth and water as tokens of unconditional submission from those that they otherwise intended to conquer (4.126*, 6.48.2, 7.32, 7.133.1). In Herodotus, a request made in symbolic form may receive a symbolic answer, as when the Spartans reply to Darius' demand by throwing the Persian herald down the well so that he can have Laconian earth and water (7.133.1).

The historian employs a pattern of confrontation between rich and powerful aggressors and poor and isolated communities defending themselves. Related to this innocence is the wisdom contest, *Weisheitswettstreit*. The simple outwit the learned, the barbarian gets the better of the so-called civilized, the young outwit their elders (Gorgo and Aristagoras). The weak outwit the powerful by presenting a riddling gift or supplying an enigmatic object to interpret.¹² The gifts sent by Cambyses with duplicitous intent (3.17.2) are rejected by the percipient king of the Ethiopians who realizes that the heralds are spies and that the true purport of the gifts concerns the conquest of his people. In return for the scarlet robe, a jar of palm wine, an alabaster casket of myrrh, and a gold necklace and bracelet (which he interprets quite rightly as chains), the Ethiopian dispatches a stiff bow and advises them to report that only when the Persians can easily bend and string it should they try to subdue the free Ethiopians (3.21.3*). The challenge is, here and elsewhere, a ritualized insult, a negative greeting; here, of course, there is also a reference to the resources of the weak but righteous in the *Odyssey* and *Philoctetes*.¹³

¹² Aly 1921.83 following Stein ad loc., notes that the motif is found from Homer to Tacitus, at least; Hadas 1935.113. A purely Greek example with the same moralizing principle occurs between the Athenians (i.e., Themistocles "the greedy") and the Andrians: 8.111. *Giles 1913 records medieval and modern examples of the dispute by fingers including the notable chapter of Rabelais, *Gargantua* bk. II, ch. 19.

¹³ Another theme should not be overlooked. The land of the Ethiopians is a kind of Paradise, a place where food produces itself, men need not work and live extra long lives, everyone is big and handsome, tables automatically fill with food, a fountain of youth flows, etc., etc. (3.18, 23.2-3). Whether we call it Utopia or Schlaraffenland (Grimm #158; cf. #36), its nature is congruent with the Herodotean thesis that the ends of the earth have the most exotic products and often the noblest characters (3.25.1; cf. 3.106 ff.). The equation of morally good (3.21.2) and primitive occurs

Sign language appears necessary in a few cases, for instance, dumb shows like the use of hands to communicate between strangers and the silent acting-out of a dangerous message. Since no common language exists between the lusty Amazons and their Scythian boy-friends, they communicate their intentions by hand to convey their message. When explicit words might be ill advised, actions sometimes replace words. Thrasyboulus “replied” to Periander’s messenger by cutting down the highest ears of grain without a word. To the messenger, a man concerned only with words, he seemed a fool, but Periander “comprehended what had been done.” Since voice or screech could not reach the Persian fleet off Marathon, someone in the hills behind sent the infamous shield-signal. The Samians requested military aid from the Spartans in an elaborate speech to which the Spartans replied by saying that they had forgotten the beginning and had not understood the end. Thereupon the Samians bring in a symbolic sack and announce “the sack needs barley.” The laconic adepts at symbolic languages criticize even this as too wordy (4.113.2, 5.92.ζ2-η1, 6.115, 3.46).

The Scythians devised an object-riddle that they despatched to the frustrated Persians pursuing them. “They sent a herald to Darius with the following gifts: a bird, a mouse, a frog and five arrows. The Persians asked the bearer what the senders intended. He replied that his orders were to deliver the objects and return as quickly as possible. He bid the Persians themselves, if they were clever, to determine what the gifts were saying (εἰ σοφοί εἰσι, γινῶναι τὸ θέλει τὰ δῶρα λέγειν). So the Persians pondered the gifts.” Darius complacently conjectured that the rebus symbolized surrender, earth and water (the ethnocentric fallacy). Gobryes, however, by the same process of inferential comparison (*eikazōn*), determined that the objects signified the impossibility of the Persians ever effectively cornering the Scyths (4.131-4).¹⁴

for the Hyperboreans and the Ethiopians, and the Issedones and other Scythians are described as noble savages, as indeed were the Persians before they fell victims to the life of luxury (4.32-35; 3.17-24; 4.26.2, 46, 104; 9.122.3).

¹⁴ Benardete 1969.116-7, and Hartog 1980 emphasize the Scythian aversion to metaphor and inclination to literalism. For other examples of interpreting mysterious objects, cf. Pherecydes F174 (Jac.), Grimm #22, Herodotus 4.5.3. Such stories tend to appear in crises when the fate of an individual or tribe hangs in the balance; cf. Aly 1921.83-86. The Delphic oracle itself, and Herodotus’ copious reporting of its utterances, attest to Hellenic interest in baffling messages, but our important enigmas are the wordless ones.

One may allow little likelihood to this tale embedded in a campaign about which Herodotus' sources seem especially confused and sparse, but Herodotus utilized it to emphasize a despot's weakened sense of his own limitations and his monomaniacal desire for expansion. Like Croesus when he received his ambiguous oracle about crossing a river, the hungry autocrat will read into obscurities whatever he wishes to find. This time Darius is saved from disaster, but the credit is not his.

The distance between the signifying message, the signifier, and what it is meant to signify, the signified, encourage the original recipient — and the reader — to err, to misinterpret. Indeed the reader is forced to participate in history as it happens, and Herodotus warns us not to relax in comfortable hindsight. Human knowledge, always partial and provisional in Herodotus, shows its limitations most clearly when forced to deal with signs and symbols. Men ignore them, misread them, and suffer.

IV. Conclusions

The author's first sentence bespeaks an anxiety about memory and a proper apportioning of glory to all the tribes of men in war and peace. Without arguing his date of "publication" in the period 440-415 BCE, we may observe that this entire period is marked by a sense of confidence among the Greeks of their military superiority to the barbarians and a loss of political homogeneity amongst themselves. This combination encouraged the production of a more modulated, even positive, portrait of a former enemy and might express a sharpened awareness of historical issues and accomplishments that were threatened by the growing rift among the Greek superpowers. This explains his implicit urgency, his relevance to the issues that his contemporaries faced.¹⁵

Herodotus determined to preserve in writing unusual and noteworthy achievements, Greek and barbarian, and to accord them due

¹⁵ Fornara 1981 (with bibliography) 152-3, 156; idem 1971.79-81, 86-88. Herodotus' references to events after 478 are sparse, but this is evidence of his disciplined selectivity, not his lack of engagement with contemporary issues. His references, like those of contemporary drama, are oblique but clear enough to those who care to notice them.

celebration. His two stated purposes imply that distinction once won can easily disappear, that the past fades rapidly and requires vigorous activity (*historiē*) to recover and vigorous activity to convey to an indefinite posterity. These human events should NOT become extinct or forgotten (*exitēla*), these amazing deeds should NOT be without glory (*aklea*, the first Homeric echo). Unwanted outcomes of this nature were to be expected in the absence of his intervention.

To keep green the memory of transitory events, events known only partially even by those who experienced them, was a task whose difficulty was compounded by the privileged position of myth and by the Hellenic tendency to devalue or ignore contingent and recent experience. The medium that he selected was not poetry with its dignity established, but prose, heretofore the medium of utilitarian matters such as laws, courtroom controversy, mariners' guides, and travellers' tales.

Herodotus borrowed and adjusted techniques from existing genres in order to present his materials in a memorable way. He plundered both the higher culture (epic and drama; cf. *Ar. Poet.* 17.3 = 1455a 29-30) and everyday experience (folktales and family traditions) to produce a self-explanatory description of recent events, one full of the illusionistic techniques of Homer and the tragedians that suggest that the reader observes events directly and for himself.¹⁶

IVA. When and why does Herodotus present nonverbal behavior?

Nonverbal behavior appears in *two* principal situations in the narrative. First, nonverbal communication appears in the inclusion of sub-historical, anthropological data on groups, customs and habits that are not significant for particular events but that characterize a city or nation or race and contribute to shaping their social structure, cultural horizons, and political-historical fate. This category includes ethnic mating practices, occupations, worship, and greetings, not the specific, historical responses of individuals, their movements, positions, and sounds.

We have noted that Herodotus sought remarkable nonverbal communication in his documentary mode: nonverbal customs are as

¹⁶ Fornara 1983.30-2, 171-2.

worthy of report as peculiarities of speech and government. Indeed, they are more worthy — if one judges by numbers of examples alone. Modes of sacrifice and burial, occupational peculiarities, parameters of acceptable behavior at parties, not to mention postures for excretion and methods of dismembering your slain enemies drew his attention. These phenomena are cultural indexes, and Herodotus moves primarily on the level of the clash of cultures, not individuals.¹⁷

Second, Herodotus complemented the words and actions of important historical individuals such as Xerxes with descriptions of their behavior, their emotional state as expressed by their body language. This supplied a psychological portrait of men of particular significance for his history. Gestures concentrate attention on the momentous instant: intangible qualities like honor and trust are portrayed by visible and audible signals; as in the epic and drama, concepts are given substance. There is an exalted eloquence to gesture, an independent rhetoric, that sometimes seems to correlate to true meaning more directly than words: οὐ λόγῳ ἀλλὰ ἔργῳ. Literature cannot duplicate real life and therefore condenses it, providing a synoptic version that hopes to trap the essential. Nonverbal activities can illuminate or expose the real meaning of a character's words and deeds. This is one reason that Herodotus' manner seems most suspicious when he is trying to be most perceptive and insightful.¹⁸

Such an attempt at psychological insight resembles the manner of later ancient biography or some modern psycho-history and seems to have offended Thucydides; yet even he, not to mention later practitioners, reconstructed the motives and thoughts of Cleon, Nicias, and Alcibiades. Herodotus, like Homer, externalizes those inward states by gestures, sounds, and other forms of nonverbal communication.¹⁹ Herodotus is "most Homeric" ("Longinus"

¹⁷ Cf. Redfield 1985.116-18.

¹⁸ Modern literary realists like to note uniqueness in language and body movements (idiolect and idiogest), but ancient authors rarely individuate by these means. One might find that children or women speak and act in a different way in Herodotus (age or gender dichotomized behavior expressed by fewer particles, more asyndeton, fewer abstract words, more wailing; consider 3.53 and 5.51, Periander's and Cleomenes' daughters), but authenticity and psychological portraiture (How and Wells 1928.I.47-48) are usually subordinated to the presentation of types, individuals who represent a class.

¹⁹ The inclusion of gestures may reflect the artless recording of oral sources for folktales and oral legends (How and Wells 1928.I.28) or the artful pretence of such (Im-

13.3) of writers partly because he adopts the poet's persuasive way of portraying character. He allowed himself a functional and limited freedom to reconstruct decisive moments in the lives and thoughts of his protagonists where authentic information was spare or nonexistent. Reports of nonverbal communication in such a context, vignettes of personal experience, often offer details that "explain" the critical scene. The result is neither fact nor fiction — in our tidy compartments — but "transfigured tradition" that discovers an internal coherence in the events related. Interpretation and reconstruction structure the amorphous data of every historical investigation.

More particularly (as a subcategory of reconstruction), speechless communication appears in the *Histories*, as in the epics, to mark the climax of a series of actions and words. Herodotus, like Homer, points issues by describing dramatic confrontations. He had seen in the *Odyssey* that the laughter and object-throwing of the suitors had sounded their death knell. So the froward Persian emissaries at the Macedonian court banquet proceeded from poetic compliments and hints about the local women to fondling the breasts of their hosts' mothers and sisters and trying to kiss them, a nonverbal message too clear to ignore (5.18-21). The nonverbal communication of individuals externalizes and makes concrete the violation of custom, the *nomoi* of others, that characterizes despotic behavior at its worst.

The sources of Herodotus' narrative sometimes came to him with an explanation of a man's behavior incorporated dramatically in their accounts. Passages with nonverbal communication are often the ones that have been identified, by Aly especially, as folktales and novellas. One should not conclude that Herodotus was at the mercy of his sources. Rather, in situations where no better information was to be found, he chose to present, *faute de mieux*, the ideas he could assemble on the personality of Cambyses, say, or Xerxes, or the struggle to overpower the magi. The legends that surround the mighty are considered to reflect some historical (folk?) perception. And some few gestures and nonverbal sounds were significant historical facts that required notice (e.g., the shield signal at Marathon).

A final consideration ought to be mentioned. Herodotus had limited confidence in reports and reporters, and he supplements

others' *logoi* with physical *erga* whenever possible. The object from the past represents an unmediated, or less mediated, historical reality than the words of contemporary informants. This lunge in the direction of source criticism led him to mention historical inscriptions, works of art, and monuments, however inadequate, partial or uncritical his method may seem to us.²⁰

IVB. Herodotus the Inventor of History

Nonverbal communication added a unique dimension to Herodotus' presentation of the past. He borrowed many strategies to convey his interpretation of human events, but always with attention to his truth-telling obligations. I conclude with a general consideration of his tactics for distancing himself from materials that he has incorporated. In some cases he communicates explicit disbelief or scepticism; in others he provides only signals that the reader should carefully measure his confidence. This survey should help us appreciate the unsystematic but hardly uncritical presentation of human words, deeds, and monuments that Herodotus left behind.

Many are the clues that distinguish materials that deserve varying degrees of confidence. Herodotus sometimes offers explicit denials of credence (e.g., 1.75.3, 6.121.1, 8.8) and warnings that inclusion does not constitute endorsement (esp. 2.123.1, 7.152.3); one also encounters specific clauses that encourage caution, at the least (*legetai, hōs phasi*, etc.); the use of oblique intrusive infinitives (to indicate stories reported without credence of the *histōr*); and the device of putting narratives in the mouths of his characters (such as the Corinthian Socles' tales of tyrannical terror).²¹ These literary techniques distance Herodotus from the accounts of others.

The use of *oratio recta* is another matter entirely. Speech presented directly exemplifies one of Herodotus' much misunderstood techniques for explaining the past. There were occasions when Herodotus had extensive, or at least some dependable, evidence for what actually had been said between two or more individuals, but many speeches given in direct discourse must have taken place, if they did take place, in situations where (what we would call) dependable evidence was hard to come by.

²⁰ Pearson 1941, Raubitschek 1961, Müller, 1981, West 1985.

²¹ Pearson 1941 on credulity and scepticism; on infinitives, Cooper 1974.

I think that all of Herodotus' recreations of Greek and barbarian speeches are founded on some report, legend, story, or *logos* that he had received, on tradition (true or false is not the issue here), and that he has reworded or expanded this in accord with epic conventions for such motivating, decisive, and explanatory situations. Those who deny this degree of historical fidelity to our author have not yet devised a method to prove their case and cannot explain, to my satisfaction, a number of passages, not least 3.80.1 and 6.43.3 (the "constitutional debate"). Furthermore, once one begins to jettison speeches and acts for their seeming improbability, one would scarcely know where to draw the line for the *Histories* between acceptable fact and objectionable fiction, absent independent confirmation — which is nearly always absent for ancient historical phenomena (*ta genomena*). Some more intimate dialogues may still have some foundation in a *logos legomenos*. When Herodotus takes us to the bedroom of the King of Kings, to the secret confabulations between Astyages and Harpagus, to the cottage of Spaco and Mitradataes, or to the whispered plotting of the Persian conspirators (3.134; 1.108, 111-12; 3.71-73), no one (including Herodotus) believed that minicams and microphones were in place. The direct speeches reveal the resources of an historical intelligence supplying motives and causes, and suggesting aspects of historical issues that the available evidence, traditions and monuments, may have only weakly implied. Speeches, in Herodotus' approach, amplify those suggestions, and Thucydides' speeches, in the view of many, were not so different. Similarly, to return to the subject at hand, nonverbal communication offers access to understanding past circumstances when alternatives do not exist.

Herodotus expects his reader to understand the literary as well as the historical purpose of necessary "fictions," to recognize dramatic reconstructions for what they are, namely means to transcend the prose of his predecessors, at best "faithful reporter[s] of fact and tradition," and to reach, as my commentator has written, "the higher imaginative level we associate with the drama."²² His *History* never degenerates into a sequence of reported events without meaning. The immediacy of his manner of *apodexis* succeeds in making events seem self-explanatory, thus appearing to avoid the intrusion of the author's own thought. The method is applauded for Homer, but considered

²² Fornara 1971.22-3, 34-36, 64-66.

alien by the heirs of Polybius. Explanation and meaning are incorporated into the narrative. To condemn as deceptive Herodotus' mimetic presentation, to suggest that he was pretending that folktales, propaganda and bedtime talks were verifiable data of history, is to see matters backwards.²³ The author repeatedly acknowledged his responsibility to indicate both the limits of his knowledge and credence and the extent of his intrusion.

Herodotus certainly observed performances of choral lyric and dithyrambs, dramatic presentations of tragedy and comedy, and rhapsodes' recitals of Homeric epic. All these genres utilized "body language" and referred to "inarticulate" sounds and tokens to a greater or lesser degree. Epic most resembles historiography of these genres, because it is least mimetic in performance, most dedicated to third-person narratives.²⁴ Even if Herodotus once read his massive *History* to the Athenians or the Thurians (and I doubt it), his text does not envision, indeed barely allows, oral performance for a listening group. Certainly his catalogues, ethnographic descriptions, scientific divagations, and accounts of mass movements with indications of distances covered do not lend themselves to dramatic recitation. Herodotus invented not only a new field of study, individual and communal interaction through time, but also a mode to communicate and commemorate it that does not reduce it to flat statements of number, compass direction, and end result (a table of winners and losers).

In sum, *logoi*, words and accounts, those of historical individuals, of reporters, and of the historian himself, are central to historiography yet inadequate to fully represent reality. Nonverbal signals are peripheral to historical action yet can provide a historiographically legitimate means of creating "a poetic and philosophic dimension."²⁵ The inherent meaning of *erga/genomena* is inaccessible, if such exists, so the historian's *apodexis* must apply his constructive intelligence, such as it is, to mediate between past events and his audience's refractory minds. Herodotus fulfilled this hermeneutical task in a singular

²³ Fehling 1971.11-66; cf. Aly 1921.130, on the conflict between the historical investigator and the traveller who took pleasure in believing. Herodotus is sometimes too sceptical, sometimes too credulous, but most often readers seem to forget his methodological warnings or misread his signals of doubt and disbelief.

²⁴ I am surveying NVC in Homer in a separate study.

²⁵ Fornara 1971.22.

and polymorphic fashion. Among his heretofore unacknowledged techniques one should consider nonverbal communication, an aspect of literary method that conveys the cultural context and personal psychology of his participants great and small.

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APPENDIX I

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN HOMER

The following examples are only illustrative of the variety of non-verbal communication in Homer. No indication of frequency is intended. References are to the *Iliad* first, *Odyssey* second.

I. Ritualized or conventional gestures, postures, movements, and sounds.

A. Divine worship:

Sacrifice to gods: *Il.* 1.315; 9.499; (human) 18.336; 23.175;
Od. 9.551-3; 11.25-36

Libation: *Il.* 9.656-7; 24.284-7; *Od.* 7.184; 15.258; 21.264

Prayer to Gods: *Il.* 1.450; 3.275; 15.371; 18.75; 24.301;
Od. 9.527

Earth beating: *Il.* 9.568-70; *Od.* 11.423-4; *HH Ap.* 333

B. Ritual cleansing: *Il.* 24.302-5; *Od.* 22.480-94

C. Oath acts: *Il.* 1.234, 245; 4.158-9; 10.328; *Od.* 19.302-04

D. Supplicate: *Il.* 1.394, 500-2; 9.570; *Od.* 6.142, 149; 14.406

Knee grasp: *Il.* 8.371; 24.357, 465; *Od.* 4.322; 6.142-3;
7.142; 10.323; 22.342, 365

Hand kiss: *Il.* 24.478

Take hand to accept plea: *Il.* 24.515; *Od.* 7.167-8

Suppliant rejected by pushing away: *Il.* 6.62; 24.508; *Od.*
15.280

Suppliant's crouch: *Il.* 21.115; *Od.* 14.279; 22.312, 335, 342

E. Judicial procedures: *Il.* 18.497-508

F. Political and familial protocols: *Il.* 1.12-16, 305; 2.53-7, 84-110

Shout approval: *Il.* 8.542; 18.310; 23.869

Greetings: *Il.* 9.192-204; 18.384; 24.472-510; *Od.* 1.121-4;
4.522; 5.463; 13.354; 14.14-54; 16.15-16, 21; 17.39;
24.410

Courting: *Od.* 2.195-7; 19.157-9

Marriage: *Il.* 18.491-6; *Od.* 23.133-6

- G. Dancing: *Il.* 18.599; *Od.* 8.378; 23.145
- H. Games: *Il.* 23 passim; *Od.* 6.115-16; 8.100-247
- I. Mourning: *Il.* 18.23-5, 318; 19.284-5; 22.405 ff.; 24.160-3, 328
 - Breast beat: *Il.* 18.31, 51
 - Rolling in dust, fouling the body: *Il.* 18.23-7, 178, 203, 461; 24.163-5, 640
 - Preparations for burial: *Il.* 24.587-91
 - Hold head in arms: *Il.* 18.71; 23.136; 24.724
 - Laying out body: *Il.* 18.317, 350-2; 21.124; 24.719-20
 - Funeral: *Il.* 24.791-9
 - Feast: *Il.* 24.627-8, 802
 - Close eyes and lips of corpse: *Od.* 11.426; 24.296
 - Hair-pulling: *Il.* 18.27; 22.77-8
 - Haircutting: *Il.* 23.135, 141, 146; *Od.* 4.198
 - Fasting: *Il.* 24.641-2; *Od.* 4.788
 - Wallowing in dirt for sorrow: *Il.* 22.221; *Od.* 4.541
 - Dirge: *Il.* 18.51, 316; 19.301; 23.10-12; 24.761, 776; *Od.* 24.59, 295
 - Offer chair to guest: *Il.* 18.389; cf. 24.553
- J. Surrender: *Il.* 21.68-9; *Od.* 22.365
- K. Gift-giving: see V. A. below
- L. Drinking and Eating: *Il.* 9.215-22; 24.101-2; *Od.* 7.184; 10.9-10; 20.246-56, etc.
- N. Grooming: *Il.* 10.576; 23.41; *Od.* 4.48-50; 6.96

II. Informal (but voluntary) gestures, postures, or sounds

- A. Point: *Il.* 3.452; 10.476; *Od.* 6.144, 178, 194; 7.29; 13.344
- B. Loving embrace: *Il.* 14.346; 18.71; 19.4; 23.97-100; *Od.* 11.205-8; 21.223; 23.33
 - Sexual intercourse: *Il.* 24.130 (?); *Od.* 23.300
 - Kissing: *Il.* 6.474; *Od.* 4.522; 17.35, 39; 21.224-5; 24.398
- C. Stroking: *Il.* 1.361; 24.127; *Od.* 4.522; 13.288
- D. Clinging: *Il.* 6.406; 9.486-8; *Od.* 19.473; 22.497
- E. Meaningful glances: *Il.* 4.497; 9.180; *Od.* 9.468; 22.43
 - Eyes steady: *Od.* 19.211-12
 - Gaze in awe: *Il.* 24.629-32
- F. Nodding: *Il.* 1.528; 9.223, 620; 16.250; 22.205; *Od.* 18.154; 21.129
- G. Head-bowing: *Il.* 22.491; *Od.* 23.91

- H. Thigh-slapping in angry, fearful frustration: *Il.* 12.162; 15.397-8;
Od. 13.198; *HH Ceres* 245
- I. Breast-baring: *Il.* 22.80
- J. Beggar's tug or open hand: *Il.* 22.493; *Od.* 17.366
- K. Significant silence: *Il.* 3.8, 420; 4.431; 9.190, 620; *Od.* 7.144, 154;
8.234; 11.563; 14.110; 17.465, 491; 20.183; 23.93
- L. Grasp hand, arm, wrist: *Il.* 14.137; 24.361, 671-2 (for reassur-
ance); *Od.* 18.258 (for warning); 24.398
- M. Corpse strip/stab/defile: *Il.* 10.455-7; 11.146-7; 17.126; 18.176-9
(impale head); 22.368-400
- N. Mutilate living: *Od.* 18.86-7; 21.300-1, 308; 22.475
- O. Eat raw flesh: *Il.* 22.345-7; 24.212-13 (threat)
- P. War cry: *Il.* 16.378; 18.217; 20.50; *Od.* 22.81; 24.537
Cry of triumph: *Od.* 22.408
- Q. Whisper: *Il.* 24.170
- R. Veil face for modesty: *Od.* 1.334; 21.65
- S. Accelerate pace in joy: *Od.* 11.539; 23.207
- T. Sharp bound to get up: *Il.* 24.572, 621; *Od.* 23.32
- U. Reject by throwing: *Il.* 21.120; 22.406, 468-70; *Od.* 9.481-6, 537-
42; 17.231-2, 462; 18.394-8; 20.299
Kick: *Il.* 10.158; *Od.* 17.233
- V. Corporal punishment: *Il.* 2.265; 15.18-20; 21.299-376 (river),
489-91; 24.247; *Od.* 14.399; 19.480; 22.471-3
- W. Maintain or reduce distance: *Il.* 18.70; *Od.* 1.157; 11.544; 17.361,
447, 592; 24.392
Hide in fear: *Od.* 9.236; 22.362-4
- X. Speech rapid, loud, or stressed: *Il.* 2.97; 6.465; 17.607; *Od.* 4.281;
5.400; 10.118, 311; 22.77
- Y. Speech tone: contemptuous, kind, angry: *Il.* 1.539; 6.137; 23.446;
24.248-9; *Od.* 23.96, 182
- Z. Suicide: *Od.* 11.549 (implied)

III. Psychophysical (involuntary) signals

- A. Smell: *Il.* 14.415; *Od.* 4.406, 442; 5.264
- B. Body writhing in anxiety: *Il.* 21.492; 24.5; *Od.* 20.24
- C. Sneeze: *Od.* 17.541
- D. Crazy state: *Il.* 6.389; 15.128; 22.460; *Od.* 20.346
- E. Twitching: *Il.* 13.654; *Od.* 18.99; 22.19-20, 87-88, 473

- F. Trembling limbs: *Il.* 14.506; 24.170; *Od.* 11.527; 18.77, 88
 Limbs loosed in fear: *Il.* 16.805; 21.114; *Od.* 22.147
 Huddling in fear: *Il.* 24.510; *Od.* 22.270, 446
- G. Swoon: *Il.* 22.466-7
 Head-lolling daze: *Il.* 23.697
- H. Hair standing on end: *Il.* 24.359
- I. Belch or vomit: *Il.* 9.490-1; 16.162 (wolves); *Od.* 9.374
- J. Crowd forming or panicking: *Il.* 9.2; 11.71; 15.4; 24.707-9
 Huddling group: *Il.* 21.607; *Od.* 22.446
- K. Sweat: *Il.* 18.372; 21.51; 22.2; etc.
- L. Drunkenness: *Od.* 9.362 ff., esp. 371-4; 18.240, 331-2

IV. Subconscious gesticulation and sound (some examples also belong in categories II or III)

- A. Laughter: *Il.* 2.270; 6.484, 514; 15.101-2 (forced); 21.389; *Od.* 8.326; 9.413; 16.354; 17.542; 18.100, 163; 21.105, 376; 23.1, 59
- B. Smiles: *Il.* 14.222; 21.389; *Od.* 20.301; 22.371; 23.111
- C. Tears: *Il.* 6.405, 484; 9.591; 18.17, 66, 94, 124, 235, 340; 21.493, 506; 24.510-12, 712-14; *Od.* 4.183 ff., 523; 16.190-1; 17.304-5; 23.33, 207
 Cries of sorrow: *Il.* 18.29, 33-7, 71, 318
 of pain: *Od.* 18.98; 22.308
 of terror: *Il.* 5.68; 6.468; 20.61-2; *Od.* 10.323; 23.40
 Gasp: *Il.* 13.654
 Scream: *Il.* 16.785
 Groan: *Il.* 14.432; 18.33; 24.591; *Od.* 18.98
 Sigh: *Il.* 18.70, 78
- D. Body shrinks back: *Il.* 6.467-8
- E. Wipe off, rub: *Il.* 2.269; *Od.* 18.200
- F. Violent anger: *Il.* 1.103-05, 578-81; 8.413; 15.22-4; *Od.* 9.480-2; 21.360-5
- G. Lip-biting annoyance: *Od.* 1.381; 20.268
- H. Glances: Scowl: *Il.* 1.105; 14.82; 22.344; 24.559 (common); *Od.* 18.337
 Amazement: *Il.* 24.360; *Od.* 16.12
- I. Grab: *Od.* 19.480

V. Objects, Tokens, Clothes (associative and symbolic things external to the person)

A. Gifts

Dedications: *Il.* 1.39

Ransom: *Il.* 1.13; 6.427

Recompense: *Il.* 3.290; 9.120, 519, 576; 18.498; *Od.* 8.402-3; 20.335-6

Prizes: *Il.* 23.259; *Od.* 18.42-7; 21.73

Guest gifts: *Il.* 6.230; 10.269; *Od.* 8.415-41; 19.241-2

B. Proof of identity: Scar: *Od.* 19.393; 21.221; 23.73

C. Clothing: *Od.* 11.191; 18.67, 74; 22.1 (foul)

Hairstyles: *Il.* 2.11, 542

D. Riddling object (rebus): The Bed: *Od.* 23.179 ff.

E. Coded message: *Il.* 6.168; *Od.* 21.231

F. Tokens of authority:

Sceptre: *Il.* 2.199, 265; 23.568

Plucking bow (power): *Od.* 21.410-11

G. Memorials:

Tombs: *Il.* 23.126, 245, 331; 24.16, 666, 801; *Od.* 11.77; 12.14

H. Divine portents:

Dreams: *Il.* 1.63; 2.6-34; 10.496; *Od.* 19.535; 20.87

Augury: *Il.* 8.251; 12.200; 24.315; *Od.* 2.146-55; 15.525; 20.242

Thunder, lightning, rain: *Il.* 2.353; 8.133; 20.56; *Od.* 20.103

Unnatural events: *Il.* 11.53 ff.; 16.458 ff.; *Od.* 20.346-9

APPENDIX II

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN HERODOTUS

The following examples are only illustrative of the variety of non-verbal communication in Herodotus. No indication of frequency is intended. Rubrics follow those in Appendix I.

I. Ritualized or conventional gestures, postures, movements, and sounds

- A. Divine worship: 1.131.2; 2.48.2; 8.65.1
 - Sacrifice to gods: 1.216.2; 4.33.4, 35.4, 60; 7.54.2. *thyō* (100 + examples)
 - Libation: 2.147.4; 7.148.1
 - Prayer to gods: 7.53.2 (?); 9.62.1
 - Festivals: 2.58-64, esp. 60, 122; 4.35, 66, 180.1-3; 5.67-8; 7.206
- B. Ritual cleansing: 1.138.2; 2.172.4
- C. Oath acts: 1.165.3; 3.8.1; 4.70, 172.3; 9.11.2, 92.1
- D. Supplicate: 1.45.1, 112.1; 7.141; 9.76
- E. Judicial procedures: 4.180.2
- F. Protocols of court: 1.99.1; 3.118.1; 6.56-7; 7.136.1; 8.118.4
 - Greetings: 1.134; 2.80, 81.1
 - Courting habits: 1.216.1; 4.172.2
 - Marriage: 1.93.4, 196
- G. Dancing: 2.60.2; 6.129.3-4
- H. Games: 1.94.2, 167.2; 5.22.2; 8.26
- I. Mourning: 3.14.7; 4.71.2; 5.77.2 [or.]; 6.58.3 (headbeating); 8.99.2; 4.71.4 (strangulation); 4.71.2 (self-mutilation); 2.61.1 (breastbeating)
 - Dirge: 2.40.4, 61.1, 85.1; 5.4.2, 8; 6.58.3
 - Preparations for burial: 2.86-8; 4.71
 - Funeral: 1.216.3; 2.85.1; 5.8
 - Feast: 4.26.1; 5.8
 - Haircutting: 4.34.1, 71.2; 5.87.2-3; 6.21.1; 9.24; cf. 3.8.1
 - Fasting: 3.52.3

- J. Surrender: 7.233.1
- K. Gift-giving: see V. A. below
- L. Drinking and Eating: 1.21-2, 119.4, 216.2; 2.100.3, 107, 121d
4-5; 3.42.2*; 6.57.1, 128.1
- M. Shunning: 3.52.1-2; 7.231-2
- N. Grooming: 3.154.2; 7.208.3

II. Informal (but voluntary) gestures, postures, or sounds

- A. Point: 2.30.4; 4.150.3; 5.49.5; 8.114.2; 9.82.3
- B. Loving embrace: 5.18.5
Sexual intercourse: 1.61.1, 203.2, 216.1; 2.46.4, 89; 3.118.1;
4.9.2, 104
Kissing: 1.134.1; 2.41.3
- F. Nodding: 5.51.2; 9.111.1
- G. Head-bowing: 3.14.3
Head-hiding: 6.67.2
- I. Breast-baring: 2.85.1
- K. Significant silence: 1.10.2-3, 86.3-4, 88.1, 116.2; 6.67.3; 9.42.2
- L. Grasp hand, arm, wrist: 2.121e.5
- M. Corpse strip/stab/defile: 3.16, 125.3; 4.43.6, 62.4, 64, 68, 103.2,
202.1; 7.39.3, 238; 9.79
- N. Mutilate living: 3.118.2; 6.75.3 (self); 7.233.2; 8.105.6; 9.112; cf.
3.11.2 (public execution by slitting throat)
Bury alive: 3.35.5; 7.114
- O. Eat human flesh: 4.106
- P. War cry: 9.59.2
- T. Sharp bound to get up: 3.36.4; 7.18.1
- U. Reject by throwing object: 3.41.2; 5.92z 2
- V. Corporal punishment: 2.11.2; 4.202.1; 6.81; 7.35; 9.93.2, 112
- W. Maintain distance: 1.99.1; 5.18.2-3
- X. Speech: rapid, loud or stressed: 8.59
- Y. Speech tone: contemptuous or kind: 3.120, 151.1; 6.67.2; 8.60
init., 61.2; 9.107.1
- Z. Suicide: 1.45.3; 2.100.4; 6.75; 7.232; 8.53.2, 118.4
 - a. Fart: 2.162.3
 - b. Spit: 1.99.1, 138.2

III. Psychophysical (unconscious) body-language

- A. Smell: 3.22.3; 24.3, 87 (horse)
- B. Body writhing in anxiety: 1.111.3
- C. Sneeze/cough: 6.107.3
- D. Crazy state: 3.33-34.3; 5.92z 3; 6.75.1
- F. Trembling limbs: 9.48.3*
- J. Crowd forming or panicking: 4.203.3; 7.43.2; 8.38
- K. Sweat: 7.140.3 [or.]
- L. Drunkenness: 1.211.2, 212.2; 2.121d 5; 5.18.5

IV. Subconscious gesticulation and sound (some examples also belong in categories II or III)

- A. Laughter: 1.90.3; 3.22.2, 38.1-2; 6.67.2, 125.5; 7.105; 8.114.2; 9.82.3 (See Lateiner 1977).
- C. Tears: 1.87.2, 112.1; 2.64.2; 3.14.9 (ten words for weepy sorrow in this chapter), 32.2, 65.7, 66.1, 119.3; 6.21.2; 7.45-6; 9.16.3
Cries of sorrow: 1.86.3, 109.1, 111.4; 3.64.1, 65.7; 8.99.2; 9.31.1
of pain: 3.14.9
of terror: 1.8.3; 3.38.4; 7.18
Groan, gasp, scream, sigh: 1.86.3, 111.3; 2.175.5; 3.155.1; 6.80, 107; 7.159*
- F. Violent anger: 3.35.1, 64.2; 9.107.2, 111.5

V. Objects, Tokens, Clothes

- A. Gifts
Dedications: 1.51, 66.4, 92; 2.135.4
Ransom: 6.79.1; 9.120.3*
Recompense: 2.126; 3.130.4
Prizes: 5.8; 6.129; 8.26.6
Guest gifts: 3.17.2, 21, 22.2, 23.4, 148 (bribe); 4.172.2; 9.109.2
- B. Proof of identity: (symbol, physical mark): 1.195.2; 2.121e 5; 3.154-6; 4.9.5*; 8.88.2; 9.59.2, 74.2
- C. Clothing: 3.129.3 (foul); 4.10.3; 8.99.2
Hairstyles: 2.36.1; 3.8.3; 6.21.1

- D. Riddling object (rebus): 4.9.5, 131-2
- E. Coded message: 1.66.3; 4.113.2; 5.92z 2; 6.115
- F. Tokens of authority: 7.32, 133.1, 233.1; 1.14.3; 3.30.2, 155.1
- G. Memorials:
 - Trophies: 1.66.4; 3.59.3; 5.77.3; 8.121.1; 9.81, 121
 - Booty: 1.214; 4.68; 9.22-5, 80
 - Tombs: 7.225.2, 228.1; 9.85, 116.2
 - Objects: 1.67.2 (sacred bones); 3.24.1-2; 4.26.2 (gilded skull), 81.3, 92 (stone heaps of Darius)
 - Statues: 1.24.8, 31.5; 2.106.1, 110, 141.6; 3.88.3; 8.64.2, 121.2
 - Buildings: 7.189.3 (Boreas shrine)
- H. Divine portents, e.g.:
 - Oracles: 1.65.4; 6.86g 2; 7.140-1; 9.93.4 (see list in Fontenrose 1978 index: 453b-54a)
 - Dreams: 1.107.1, 209.1 (list in Frisch 1968)
 - Thunder, rain, lightning, etc.: 1.87.2; 8.65.1 (dustcloud)
 - Unnatural events: 1.59.1-2, 78.1; 3.153.1; 4.5.3; 6.98.1; 7.57.1-2; 8.55; 9.120.1-2
 - Visions, unnatural sounds: 6.117.3; 8.84.2

VI. Miscellaneous

- Visual comparison: 9.82 (tables of Spartans and Xerxes)
- Map: 5.49.5
- Finger counting: 6.63.2

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Dragons and Gold at the Ends of the Earth: A Folktale Motif Developed by Herodotus

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***Dragons and Gold at the Ends of the Earth:
A Folktale Motif Developed by Herodotus***
James Romm

There is a story about India in Book III of Herodotus' *Histories* which is often referred to as the Story of the Ant Gold. It is recounted so fully by Herodotus, and recurs so frequently in later authors, that it bears quoting here at some length:

The Indians in the North ... are the most warlike of the Indian tribes, and it is they who go out to fetch the gold. For in this region there is a sandy desert. There is found in this desert a kind of ant of great size--bigger than a fox, though not so big as a dog. ... These creatures as they burrow underground throw up the sand in heaps. ... The sand has a rich content of gold, and it is this the Indians are after when they make their expeditions out into the desert. Each man harnesses three camels abreast, a female, on which he rides, in the middle, and a male on each side in a leading-rein; and he takes care that the female is one who has as recently as possible given birth. They plan their timetable so as actually to get their hands on the gold during the hottest part of the day, when the heat has driven the ants underground. When the Indians reach the place where the gold is, they fill the bags they have brought with them with sand, and start for home as fast as they can go; for the ants (if we can believe the Persians' story) smell them and at once give chase; nothing in the world can touch these ants for speed, so not one of the Indians would get home alive, if they did not make sure of a good start while the ants were mustering their forces. The male camels, who are slower movers than the females, soon begin to drag and are left behind, while the females are kept going hard by the memory of their young, who were left at home. (III. 102-5, De Selincourt translation)

The story of the Ant-Gold suggests a familiar folktale pattern, in which a hero voyages to a distant land in quest of golden treasure, and must either outwit or slay the monster that guards it.¹ Indeed, the monstrous creatures that dwell at the edges of the earth in Greek myth and legend are very often portrayed as guardians of treasure. For example, both the golden apples of the Hesperides in the far West and the Golden Fleece of Colchis in the far East are protected by terrifying serpents, while the red cattle of Geryon are watched over by the monstrous dog Orthus. Other legends tell of griffins sitting atop hoards of gold in the north, or of navigational perils--rocks,

shoals, fogs and whirlpools--that threaten the sailor who dares to approach a land of marvelous wealth. The ubiquity of this folktale pattern has led some scholars to seek a common origin, and one interesting theory is often raised: that the Phoenicians, or perhaps some other mercantile nation, deliberately spread these tales in an effort to dissuade Greek traders from infringing on their markets.² However, while there is undoubtedly some truth to this notion, there is much about it that is problematic also. First, the most central stories of monster-slaying heroes in the Greek cycle of legends about the distant world--those surrounding Jason, Odysseus, Heracles, and Perseus--all portray the defeat of the guardian creatures; it seems likely that such stories would only encourage enterprising merchants to try their luck, instead of scaring them off. Second, in at least some cases, such as that of the *Argo* legend, the story itself seems to antedate the emergence of any real mercantile competition.³ Whatever the origin of the monster-guardian story, it was undoubtedly some other impetus beyond Phoenician scare tactics that caused it to assume such a prominent place in the legends surrounding the ends of the earth.

In this paper I shall examine the text introduced by the Ant-Gold story, a text which has been adduced as one of the chief instances of Phoenician propaganda⁴: Herodotus' discussion of the *eschatiai*, or "most distant lands," in chapters 106-116 of *Histories* Book III. I believe that a close analysis of this passage will show how much more resonance the monster-guardian myth takes on if we see it as a folkloric archetype, the significance of which is attested by its universal appeal, rather than as a "tall tale" invented for a specific purpose at a specific moment in history. Herodotus' text contains many examples of dragons sitting on gold-heaps, or their near equivalent; but to postulate that a Phoenician trader's quick wit gave rise to this legend does not go far in helping us understand Herodotus.⁵ We should rather look to the meanings inherent in this familiar folktale pattern, as found both in Greek mythology and that of many other cultures and eras, and at the ways in which Herodotus has adapted this archetypal story pattern to suit his own particular interests in this passage.

Herodotus' discussion of "the furthest lands" forms an unusually long digression from his history of the Persian Wars, even for the somewhat rambling and discursive style of the work⁶; moreover, its subject matter is so distinctly set apart from that of the surrounding sections, and its construction so unified and self-contained, that we are justified in treating it as an autonomous text, a kind of geographic set piece. Its point of departure is the story of the Ant-Gold, with which I began; this story, in turn, emerges out of the great tribute list of King Darius

of Persia, in which the Indians are said to make the greatest contribution to the Persian coffers of any single nation in the empire. Herodotus' cue for this entire digression, then, is the wealth of India⁷; India's riches lead Herodotus into a discussion of the abundance of wealth throughout the *eschatiai* of the world. The organizing principle, therefore, from which the passage begins and to which it returns for its coda, is that

Αἱ δ' ἐσχατιαὶ κως τῆς οἰκεομένης τὰ κάλλιστα ἔλαχον, κατὰ περ ἥ Ἑλλὰς τὰς ὥρας πολλόν τι κάλλιστα κεχρημένας ἔλαχε. (III.106.1)

It would seem to be a fact that the remotest parts of the earth have the finest products, whereas Greece has far the best and most temperate climate. (De Selincourt translation)

Αἱ δὲ ὧν ἐσχατιαὶ οἴκασι, περικληίουσαι τὴν ἑλλήν χώρην καὶ ἐντὸς ἀπέργουσαι, τὰ κάλλιστα δοκέοντα ἡμῖν εἶναι καὶ σπανιώτατα ἔχειν αὐταί. (III.116)

In any case it does seem to be true that distant parts of the world, as they enclose and the countries which lie on the circumference of the inhabited world produce things which we believe to be most rare and beautiful.

In dealing with the *eschatiai* or "most distant lands," Herodotus is also, in a sense, dealing with the earliest age of human civilization; for, according to the Greek worldview, the cultural sophistication of the world's peoples diminished as one moved away from the highly advanced center, so that those at the very edge were also the closest to a state of nature. We must, therefore, understand this passage not simply as descriptive geography, but also as an anthropological investigation into the prehistory of the human race. In fact, most of Herodotus' ethnographic passages can be read on this level, as has been demonstrated by recent criticism: Foreign tribes represent alternate versions of humanness, which together make up a kind of vast composite picture of the race. Here, Herodotus is especially concerned with man's relationship to the natural world, as we shall see. As the term "state of nature" implies, the primitive world was thought to represent in a bare and reductive form the dynamics of this relationship.

Having set out to discuss the wealth of this most distant and therefore most primitive realm, then, Herodotus proceeds in clockwise fashion, moving from India in the far East to Arabia in the far South, Ethiopia in the Southwest, and Finally to the shadowy, nameless lands in the West and North. In each place, Herodotus lists the various riches with which these lands have been endowed, either in reality or in legend: gold, spices, incense, ebony, amber, and tin. He also notes on four occasions

that the animal life in this part of the world is strangely outsized: Animals and birds in India grow larger than elsewhere, Arabian sheep sprout gigantic tails, and Ethiopia produces "enormous" elephants. This part of the world shows other instances of unusually virulent growth as well: for example, Indian trees produce a kind of wool even finer than that of sheep, while the men of Ethiopia grow taller and live longer than any other nation on earth. In all of these examples, the *eschatiai* are portrayed as a region blessed with an extraordinary copiousness, as if the cup of nature's bounty had inexplicably been filled to overflowing there. It is the same kind of copiousness that distinguished the golden age, a primitive era in which, according to the Greek conception, everything that man needed had been spontaneously provided by the beneficent hand of nature.

However, the golden-age myth was only one aspect of ancient primitivism; the Greeks also depicted man's early history as a bleak struggle for survival, in which nature was not a nurturing mother but a harsh taskmaster who opposed him at every turn. Herodotus' portrayal of the *eschatiai* manages to combine these two antithetical conceptions. For, in spite of their abundance, the riches of these distant lands are defended by a variety of dangerous and monstrous creatures, with which man must do battle in order to obtain them. In this one brief section of his work, Herodotus gives us a total of five examples of such man-animal combat:

- 1) As we have seen already, the Indians steal their gold from ferocious ant-like creatures in their country's desert wastes;
- 2) The Arabians burn storax as a sort of insecticide, in order to repel the poisonous, flying snakes which hover about their frankincense trees (107);
- 3) The Arabians have to protect themselves with leather sheaths against winged, bat-like creatures that menace their faces and eyes in order to get at the casia deposits that fill the shores of their inland lakes (110);
- 4) The Arabians, again, have to steal their cinnamon from giant birds, who take it off to their unreachable mountain eyries to use in building nests (111);
- 5) The one-eyed Arimaspians of the far North are said to gather gold from griffins, probably by stealing it, as the Indians do from the ants (Herodotus discounts this story, thinking it improbable that the legendary Arimaspians actually exist). (116)

Thus, the whole passage has an elegant symmetry to it: Herodotus begins and ends with paired stories, both dealing with

the theft of gold from creatures who have dug it up out of their burrows; in between he recounts three stories having to do with the Arabians, each one stranger (*thomastoteron*) than the next.⁸ In all five cases, moreover, man is shown locked in a daily struggle with a deadly and monstrous foe, the prize of which is some natural resource of immense value. Thus the *eschatiai* constitute an extreme case of trouble in paradise; nature seems to be offering with one hand and fending off, rather menacingly, with the other.

Furthermore, in each case it is man's intelligence and ingenuity that enable him to defeat these dangerous beasts. Herodotus describes in detail the various ruses by which man triumphs. For example, when the Arabians are prevented from gathering cinnamon by the huge birds that take it away to their inaccessible eyries,

[they] cut up the bodies of dead oxen, or donkeys, or other animals into very large joints, which they carry to a safe spot and leave on the ground near the nests. They then retire to a safe distance and the birds fly down and carry off the joints of meat to their nests, which, not being strong enough to bear the weight, break and fall to the ground. Then the men come along and pick up the cinnamon, which is subsequently exported to other countries. (111)

This anecdote, simple in itself, creates a pointed contrast between human and animal patterns of behavior. First, the birds are said to collect the cinnamon only for use in building their nests; they have no awareness of the true value that the plant holds for man, with his sophisticated tastes and advanced system of exchange. Second, the birds are defeated by way of their own primitive, unreasoning appetite; their hoarding instinct, the very trait that puts them at odds with man to begin with, is also the flaw that he exploits in order to defeat them.

The cinnamon-bird story, like that of the Indian ants (no. 1 above) and the griffins (no. 5), follows the same folktale pattern we looked at earlier, in which a ferocious and unreasoning animal (or monster, or giant) is defeated by a clever hero, who thereby gains some fabulously valuable prize. It is a natural enough pattern, we note, from the point of view of narrative interests: The ultimate test for a hero, after all, is to overcome a monstrous or intractable creature, by wiles if not by force of arms, and if this test also involves a journey to exotic and dangerous locale, so much the better. But at a deeper level, these stories are also myths of progress, of man's conquest of primeval and terrifying forces in order to make possible a stable and organized life for himself in a political setting. They are, in a

sense, parables of man's evolution out of a state of nature, when that state is conceived in its harsh and ungenerous aspect. Herodotus' stories follow this folktale pattern in that they depict the victory of man over beast, in a far-off land, for the sake of a great reward. And this victory is achieved, particularly in the case of the cinammon-birds, by the use of clever stratagems or inventions.⁹

Moreover, Herodotus goes on to extract from these folkloric accounts of the distant world the deeper meanings inherent in them. Within this digression about the most distant lands is inserted a further digression, that is, a discussion of the principle of *tisis*, or compensatory balance, in the natural world. This internal digression, which occupies the exact center of the larger one, can be outlined as follows: Herodotus' story of the winged serpents in Arabia leads him into a meditation on the *pronoia* or divine foresight in nature that keeps the populations of such predator species under control. This *pronoia* has established a balance whereby defenseless creatures, like the hare, reproduce in great numbers, while the beasts of prey that feed on them bear their young singly. Moreover, the numbers of the very deadliest creatures--lions and poisonous snakes--are kept down by a further expedient: Their capacity to reproduce is destroyed by the very process of reproduction, so that each female can give birth only once over the course of its life. Thus the fetal lion cub shreds its mother's uterus with its sharp claws, rendering her sterile, while the adder's offspring kills its mother by gnawing its way out of the womb. If not for this phenomenon, these deadly creatures would increase unchecked until they caused the extinction of the species on which they prey.

What is the thematic connection between this central discussion of *pronoia* and the five combat myths that surround it? Herodotus does not provide any explicit answers, but the implications of the five stories themselves are clear enough. Man, like the hare, is subject to the depredations of numerous species that have fearsome physical advantages over him; but instead of superfetation, nature has provided him with an intellect that allows him to fend off his foes.¹⁰ The use of leather sheathing against swarms of bats or the burning of storax to repel flying snakes are evidence of this intellectual gift; they are exactly the kind of invention that Herodotus elsewhere so admires in races that have successfully adapted to their environments.¹¹ Moreover, the first and fourth stories--those of the Indian ants and the cinnamon-hoarding birds--illustrate the most sublime achievement of human intelligence: the ability to use an opponent's greatest strength as an opening to defeat it.¹² By understanding the nature of the beast and turning it to his best advantage, man emerges triumphant. The hero of the

combat myth typically uses the same kind of master stroke of intelligence to turn the greatest strength of an adversary into its greatest weakness¹³: Jason, for example, knowing that the Sown Men are belligerent and brutish, causes them to turn their hostility on one another and thereby escapes from the fray unhurt.

Thus Herodotus uses a story pattern derived from folklore in a very different context, a theoretical discussion of forethought in nature. The monsters that he portrays in these five stories are not malevolent or dire, as we would expect in a true folktale world. They are merely going about their daily attempts to survive, just as man is; they are at odds with him only because of the unfortunate ways in which their goals for survival happen to clash with his. Thus, the ants and griffins who “guard” the gold of the far East and North are not true guardians, as is the dragon of the Hesperides; we learn from later writers that they attach no value to the gold itself, but oppose the humans who come to collect it simply out of fear for the safety of their young.¹⁴ Monstrosity, in Herodotus’ portrayal of the *eschatiai*, has assumed purely natural proportions; it is an emblem of the intractability of the natural world with which man sometimes has to contend in his struggle to survive. But thanks to the intelligence with which nature has endowed him, man is able to overcome such threats to his survival; the system is therefore in balance.

But if Herodotus has transferred his man-animal struggles from a mythic to a naturalistic sphere, this is not to say that he has removed from them the possibility of heroic endeavor. On the contrary, he clearly has the greatest respect for the courage of the barbarians who engage in such perilous fortune-hunting. They are the latter-day heroes, risking their lives against foes every bit as determined and dangerous as the monsters of mythology.¹⁵ For instance, Herodotus focusses on the strength and determination of the men who steal the ant-gold, calling them the most warlike of the Indians (*machimótatoi*, 102). Moreover, he informs us that their quest is costly even when wholly successful: They can escape the enraged ants only by giving up to them their male camels (presumably as a diversion) as they flee. Herodotus’ emphasis on the difficulty of this trade, and the losses that it inevitably entails, evokes a certain heroic grandeur, like that of the *Iliad*. The historian seems similarly to admire the fighting spirit of the Arabians, who stoically pursue the goods that make up their livelihood, even though they can only win them *duspeteós*, “haplessly” or “without fortune’s aid.” In their struggle against monstrous foes at the ends of the earth, these peoples have taken on the stature of the folktale hero who slays the dragon. By winning the heap of gold, they are also

winning through to a civilized world in which gold, and not food, is the primary unit of exchange.

Thus, like Hesiod's Isles of the Blessed and Homer's Elysium, the *eschatiai* of Herodotus serve as places in which the heroic virtues of a bygone age live on; except in this case, it is specifically mental prowess, rather than martial strength or moral virtue, which is emphasized. The Arabians and Indians are portrayed as latter-day versions of Odysseus, using wit and wiles to defeat a series of demythologized monsters. They are conceived of simultaneously as noble savages, struggling against a natural environment which begrudges them their survival, and as children of the Golden Age, reaping the great bounty of nature which is unstintingly spread before them. We can now see that the two Greek visions of the primitive world outlined earlier are not necessarily opposed to one another, but in fact are closely bound together in the tale of the monster-slaying hero. Man in a state of nature is both blessed and cursed, both the victim and the master of the creatures around him, both heroic in stature and pathetically helpless.

The folktale pattern of the primitive tribe which slays the monster to get his gold was repeated over and over again in Greek and Roman literature, particularly in the legends concerning the edges of the earth. In fact, the very ubiquity and longevity of this story type should make us wary of attributing it to the apotropaic scare stories spread by Phoenician merchants; for the tale was still current long after the Phoenicians had ceased to ply the seas. Clearly it had a strong thematic appeal to the ancient imagination, and thus became a kind of emblem of man's ambivalent place in nature at the beginning of evolution, before the advent of the city-state. The degree to which this thematic resonance is elaborated in ancient literature varies greatly from author to author; but it is nowhere more clearly and subtly developed than in Herodotus, who actually leaps from his collection of distant-world anecdotes to a theoretical discussion of the processes of nature. The construction of this passage of *Histories* Book III should serve as a warning to us to look first for the psychological and thematic significance of a folktale motif, and only afterward, if indeed at all, to try to recover its origin in history.

NOTES

¹See Stith Thompson, *Motif Index to Folk Literature*, K330-60, N 570 ff., B11.6.2, B292.8, D950.0.1. The pattern I am concerned with here is related to, but distinct from, the story classed as 'The Dragon Slayer' by Thompson (*The Folk Tale*, pp. 23-32), in which the dragon or ogre is a local problem, terrorizing the countryside. For the general outlines of the distant-world version of the combat myth, in which the hero seeks gold or some precious object from the dragon, see F. Vian, *Les Origines de Thèbes*, Paris, 1963, 94-109; G.S. Kirk,

Myth, Berkeley, 1970, 185-8, 191; and J. Fontenrose, *Python*, Berkeley 1959, *passim*.

²Schulten, "Säulen des Herakles," in O. Jessen, *Die Straße von Gibraltar*, Berlin, 1927, p. 181; R. Henning, *Terrae Incognitae*, Leipzig, 1937, v. I 53; Robert Lenoble, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'idée de Nature*, Paris, 1969, p. 162 and n. 293.

³See E.H. Bunbury, *A History of Ancient Geography*, London, 1883, v. 1, 26 f. and n. 7. Bunbury also notes (pp. 20-22) that Mimnermus' version of the Argonaut legend placed Aeetes simply "by Ocean's fringe" (fr. 11 Diels), either in the far West or the far East, and supposes that Colchis did not become the locale of the story until later.

⁴In *A Commentary on Herodotus* (Oxford 1912), How and Wells introduce the passage in question with these words: "The marvels and dangers related by Herodotus ... are the fictions of traders anxious both to conceal their market and to enhance the value of their products" (290). But the passage they adduce as evidence of a tradition of a *Phoinikikon pseudos*, "Phoenician lie," is not at all to the point, as the authors themselves admit. Moreover, the phrase *Phoinikikon pseudos* means only to *teratôdes*, "strangeness," according to Eustathius (1757.59), and does not imply any apotropaic intent.

⁵Nor is it profitable to attempt to uncover the animal *realia* behind Herodotus' fables, as some scholars have done; see, for example, R. Henning, "Herodots 'goldhütende Greifen' und 'goldgrabende Ameisen'," *Rheinische Museum* 79, 1930, 326-32, and the remarks by How and Wells on III. 97 ff.

⁶It is therefore thought by some editors to have been added to the work as part of a revision. Cf. K. Trüdinger, *Studien zur Geschichte der griechisch-römischen Ethnographie*, Basel, 1918, p. 16. If this is true, then it may stand as further testimony to Greek interest in the distant world during the 5th Century B.C.

⁷About which he was entirely mistaken; see How and Wells *ad. loc.*

⁸The symmetry of the passage goes even farther than this: The two general statements about the nature of the *eschatai* form a frame, while the discussion of *pronoia* (on which see below) occupies the exact center of the series.

⁹For a similar motif in the Arabic tradition, see the second voyage of Sinbad in the *Thousand and One Nights*, where much the same stratagem is used to procure diamonds from the inaccessible Diamond Mountains. It may also be significant in this context that a common motif of "trickster" tales among the American Indians is that animals are lured off a cliff by the promise of fresh food, similar to the way in which the cinnamon-birds are foiled here (see Funk and Wagnall's *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, 1980, s.v. "trickster").

¹⁰For a similar conclusion in Plato, see the great speech of Protagoras in the dialogue of that name, 320 ff., and the discussion by Guthrie, *In the Beginning*, 86-8.

¹¹For example, those of the Scythians, IV.46 f., IV.61. See Trüdinger *op. cit.* p. 27 f.

¹²In this, man exhibits the same sort of *pronoia* that keeps the animal kingdom in balance. For Herodotus clearly sees as parallel the way in which the greatest advantages of the lion and the adder--their claws and teeth--also turn out to be their greatest disadvantages, and the way in which mankind is able to convert the rapacity of his foes--the very trait that makes them so deadly--into a weapon with which to destroy them.

¹³Fontenrose's theme no. 9, *Python*, p. 11.

¹⁴Cf. Nearchus *apud* Arrian, *Indika* 15.5 f., for the ants, and Aelian, *De Nat. Anim.* IV. 27, for the griffins. Herodotus himself makes clear that the Indian ants only possess their stores of gold by accident; they cast it up, unwittingly, when digging their burrows (III. 102).

¹⁵This link between the legendary heroism of the age of myth and the daily competition among species in latter-day times is at least as old as Homer. The many animal similes of the *Iliad*, for example, depict, within the natural world, the same grim resignation in the face of danger that distinguishes the *aristoi* of the heroic world. Compare Aristeas' use of Homeric epithets to lend dignity to the Arimaspians in his poem; J.P. Bolton, *Aristeas*, Oxford 1958, pp. 16-19.

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James Romm is currently completing his doctorate in the Comparative Literature/Classics program at Princeton University. His dissertation examines the legends and literature concerning the edges of the earth in ancient Greece. He will join the Classics Faculty at Cornell University in the fall of 1987.

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Herodotus and Mythic Geography: The Case of the Hyperboreans

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HERODOTUS AND MYTHIC GEOGRAPHY: THE CASE OF THE HYPERBOREANS

JAMES ROMM
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Does Herodotus believe in the Hyperboreans, a race which, as he himself points out, belongs more to poetry than to ethnography? His position should reveal itself, if anywhere, in the paragraph which concludes his long discussion of the myth:

(1) καὶ ταῦτα μὲν Ὑπερβορέων περὶ εἰρήσθω· τὸν γὰρ περὶ Ἀβάριος λόγον τοῦ λεγομένου εἶναι Ὑπερβορέου οὐ λέγω, [λέγονται]* ὥς τὸν οἷσθον περιέφερε κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν οὐδὲν σιτεόμενος. εἰ δέ εἰσι ὑπερβόρεοί τινες ἄνθρωποι, εἰσὶ καὶ ὑπερνότιοι ἄλλοι. (2) γελῶ δὲ ὁρέων γῆς περιόδους γράψαντας πολλοὺς ἤδη καὶ οὐδένα νόον ἔχόντως ἐξηγησάμενον, οἱ Ὁκεανόν τε ῥέοντα γράφουσι πέριξ τὴν γῆν, ἐοῦσαν κυκλοτερέα ὥς ἀπὸ τόρνου, καὶ τὴν Ἀσίην τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ποιεῦνται ἴσην. ἐν ὀλίγοις γὰρ ἐγὼ δηλώσω μέγαθός τε ἐκάστης αὐτέων καὶ οἷη τίς ἐστι ἐς γραφὴν ἐκάστη. (4.36)

*λέγονται propos. Schweighäuser λέγων mss., del. Reiske et edd. plurimi λέγων...σιτεόμενος secl. Rosen

The ambiguities surrounding his final assessment of the matter, however—εἰ δέ εἰσι ὑπερβόρεοί τινες ἄνθρωποι, εἰσὶ καὶ ὑπερνότιοι ἄλλοι (4.36.1)—make Herodotus' attitude toward the Hyperboreans unclear. Scholars have generally seen in this sentence a skeptical or ironic refutation of the legend; J. L. Myres, for example, translates, "If there are Hyperboreans, there should also be Hypernotians 'furthest South'; *and there are not* [Myres' italics]."¹ Casaubon, however, responding to a similar reading proposed in the seventeenth century, noted that the sentence has no contrafactual force that would make this an obvious interpretation, and so treated it as entirely neutral and non-dismissive in tone.² The vast majority of commentators and editors have preferred Myres'

¹ *Herodotus, Father of History* (Oxford 1953) 40. For an earlier view by the same author, see "An Attempt to Reconstruct the Maps Used by Herodotus," *Geographic Journal* 8 (1896) 608.

² Cf. F. Friedmann, *Is. Casauboni Commentarius in Strabonem* (Leipzig 1818) 433. The dispute has good ancient pedigree: Eratosthenes and Strabo both read 4.36.1 as a dismissal (see below), whereas the scholiast to Pindar's *Pyth.* 10 (line 10) seems to have derived his curious notion of bipolar Hyperboreans from an affirmative reading of the same sentence. The ambiguity is perfectly embodied, moreover, in the variant manuscript readings of a scholium to Apollonius Rhodius (2.675), where the shift between μὲν and μή has Herodotus either believing in, or rejecting, the legend of the Hyperboreans. See Hugo Berger, *Die geographische Fragmente des Eratosthenes* (Leipzig 1880) for the μὲν variant, which has not been included in Wendel's *Scholia in Apollonium Rhodium vetera*

reading over Casaubon's,³ and have strengthened their position by linking the Hyperborean/Hypernotian sentence with the refutation of Ocean immediately following (4.36.2). This juxtaposition notwithstanding, I shall here attempt to show that the Hyperboreans cannot in fact be paired with Ocean, or with the other mythic constructs debunked in the *Histories*, and that Herodotus' final assessment does in fact mean what Casaubon took it to mean: "Si ea est terrae figura, ut sint aliqui Hyperborci, ergo erunt et Hypernotii."⁴ I shall then point out a set of parallels which connect the Hyperboreans to a more affirmative correlate than Ocean: Herodotus' own search for the headwaters of the Nile in Book 2.

The case of the Hyperboreans is worth an extended examination, I believe, since what is at stake is not only the meaning of a sizable section of the *Histories*, but also our ability to situate Herodotus properly in the evolution of scientific geography. The Hyperboreans are only the most prominent of several cases involving the πείρατα γαίης, the Homeric and Hesiodic "borders of the earth," in which Herodotus finds himself torn between the mythic, speculative constructs of the archaic age and the nascent empiricism of the fifth century B.C. In the majority of these cases Herodotus casts a skeptical eye on the archaic legacy, leading some scholars to label him a 'Father of Empiricism,'⁵ but this formulation fails to account for other passages in which mythic and speculative thinking still predominate; indeed, the contradictions between the two approaches have led Lionel Pearson and others to question whether any

(Berlin 1935), or in the testimonia section of Haiim Rosen's *Herodoti Historiae* v. 1 (Leipzig 1987) 372.

³ Casaubon's supporters include H. F. Tozer, *History of Ancient Geography*² (Cambridge 1935) 78, and James Rennell, *The Geographical System of Herodotus* (London 1830) 198–99. Other writers have implied an openness to his reading, without voicing any explicit judgement; so Moses Hadas, "Utopian Sources in Herodotus," *CP* 30 (1935) 113–21, and Marie Delcourt, *L'Oracle de Delphes* (Paris 1955) 159–60. Among the many authorities ranged against this reading, and in favor of Myres, we may here cite only the most prominent: E. H. Bunbury, *A History of Ancient Geography* v. 1 (London 1879) 160, 175; W. W. How and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus* v. 1 (Oxford 1936) 316; Hugo Berger, *Geschichte der Wissenschaftlichen Erdkunde des Griechen*² (Leipzig 1903) 125; and Felix Jacoby, "Herodotos," *RE* Suppl. 2 (1913) cols. 432, 470. Of the commentaries I have been able to consult, none deviate from this position, and only Legrand bothers to note that a counterfactual condition would better have suited Herodotus' presumed intention ("Herodotea," *REA* 60 [1938] 232 n. 2).

⁴ Above, note 2, 433; Schweighäuser (*Herodoti Musae* v. 2 [Paris 1816] ad loc.), on the other hand, translates the εἶσι of the apodosis to Latin *fuertint*.

⁵ This view is suggested by Dietram Müller, "Herodot—Vater des Empirismus? Mensch und Erkenntnis im Denken Herodots," in *Gnomosyne: Menschliches Denken und Handeln in der frühgriechischen Literatur*, ed. G. Kurz, D. Müller, and W. Nicolai (Munich 1981) 299–319. While aware of Herodotus' frequent reversion to speculative arguments from τὸ οἰκός (310–13), Müller virtually ignores this issue in his concluding remarks, where he actually compares Herodotus' empiricism to that of Hume (314–15). A similar view, that Herodotus "was careful not to cross the boundary into mythological space," has been voiced by Christiaan van Paassen (*The Classical Tradition in Geography* [Groningen 1957] 141), who has made a thorough and probing study of the problem, but who nevertheless overstates the case for Herodotus' empiricism. The pro-empirical bias also pervades the How and Wells commentary (above, note 3), especially the appendix on "The Geography of Herodotus" (434–37), and Jacoby's *RE* article (above, note 3, esp. cols. 470–71).

coherent scheme of thought underlies Herodotean geography at all.⁶ I would argue that the inquiry into the Hyperboreans (which I shall henceforth refer to as the Hyperborean *logos*) has been consistently misread as a dismissal in an effort to uphold the first of these characterizations and refute the second: To interpret otherwise would be to indict Herodotus both for naïve adherence to myth and for glaring methodological inconsistency. Thus my first task will be to situate this passage within the larger context of Herodotus' response to mythic geography, to show that Casaubon's non-skeptical reading does not, in fact, conflict with the empiricism found elsewhere in the *Histories*.

I

Herodotus' explorations of the old Homeric *πείρατα γαίης* have been analyzed in several recent studies as a special type of cognitive experiment.⁷ In geographic excurses Herodotus often moves centrifugally from *ὄψις* to *ἄκοή*, that is, from the realm of his own experience to that which can be investigated only through report; at the furthest remove his inquiry arrives at a realm unattested even in report yet still somehow known through poetry and popular belief.⁸ These most distant locales form a coherent group for Herodotus, embodying the unique problem of how a place or a people have come into repute without having been seen, or even perhaps without having existed; hence it is with these alone, and not with the vast range of other, less remote legends he evaluates, that we shall concern ourselves.⁹ The major cases which fall into this

⁶ Pearson, "Credulity and Scepticism in Herodotus," *TAPA* 72 (1941) 335–55, esp. 346; and Truesdell S. Brown, "Herodotus Speculates About Egypt," *AJP* 86 (1965) 60–76, esp. 75–76. A developmental model, according to which Herodotus progressed from rationalism to empiricism in the course of his travels (especially as a result of his trip to Egypt), is presented by Kurt von Fritz, "Herodotus and the Growth of Greek Historiography," *TAPA* 67 (1936) 315–40; but, like all such models, von Fritz's depends on our ability to identify different strata of composition in the fabric of the *Histories*, a task which has not yet been proven feasible. More recently, some scholars have raised the more perplexing question of whether Herodotus ever made the travels he claims; see, for example, O. K. Armayor, "Did Herodotus Ever Go to the Black Sea?" *HSCP* 82 (1978) 45–62, and *Herodotus' Autopsy of the Fayoum* (Amsterdam 1985).

⁷ See, in particular, van Paassen (above, note 5) 117–51; Hannelore Edelmann, "ἐρημίη und ἔρημος bei Herodot," *Klio* 52 (1970) 79–86; and Hannelore Barth, "Einwirkung der vorsokratischen Philosophie auf die Herausbildung der historiographischen Methoden Herodots," in *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Welt*, ed. E. Welskopf, Band 1 (Berlin 1964) 173–85. In addition, other authors, although more closely concerned with historical than with geographic narratives, help elucidate the cognitive issues involved in the movement from *ὄψις* to *ἄκοή*; see in particular François Hartog, *Le Miroir d'Hérodote: Essai sur la représentation de l'autre* (Paris 1980) esp. 271–82; and Guido Schepens, *L'autopsie dans la méthode des historiens grecs du Ve siècle avant J.-C.* (Brussels 1980).

⁸ See Edelmann (above, note 7) for a fuller account of this concentric structure.

⁹ The more usual contrast between *ὄψις* and *ἄκοή* has in my view been overstressed, since, as Macan points out (*Herodotus: The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Books* v. 1 [London 1895] ciii–cv), these terms do not always imply a distinction in degrees of credibility (cf. 4.16.1, where *ἄκοή* is considered "reliable"). The category established by the term *ἄφανές* (2.23), identifying those few places

category are those of the river Ocean, the river Eridanus and the Tin Islands (taken together), the headwaters of the Nile, and the Hyperboreans; for all four, Herodotus dutifully concedes that he can discover no credible eyewitness report even at second or third hand.¹⁰

Herodotus seems perplexed and even annoyed by the legends which derive from this “unseen” realm—the region he once refers to as ἀφάνές (2.23)—since they defeat the method of empirical investigation he practices elsewhere. The case of Ocean, for example, proves particularly troublesome to him, and he returns to it on three separate occasions.

In the first of these discussions, his frustration is clearly discernible: He derides as ἀνεπιστημονεστέρα a theory which explains the floods of the Nile as proceeding from Ocean, the river which flows around the entire earth (2.21), and adds, “The man who makes reference to Ocean”—probably referring principally to Hecataeus—“removes the discussion into the realm of obscurity, and makes refutation impossible,” οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεγχον (2.23). That is, when dealing with unseen locales, Herodotus’ usual method of ἔλεγχος, the detective-like pursuit of a story back to its original eyewitness, cannot be usefully employed.¹¹ Nevertheless, he goes on to voice his own opinion on the matter, speculating that “the name Ocean was, I suppose, invented by some ancient poet or other, and inserted into his poetry.” The train of thought in this first investigation of an unseen locale is revealing: Herodotus begins by ruling out the possibility of disproof, then proceeds to reject the legend anyway. It would seem that, for lack of empirical evidence on which to judge the matter—obviously his preferred procedure—Herodotus falls back onto a more subjective form of refutation, based on his own sense of τὸ οἰκός or “likelihood.”¹²

Herodotus’ subjective criteria for rejecting the legend of Ocean become clearer in Book 4, where he returns to the problem in two further discussions. In the first he again complains of a lack of evidence: “They say that Ocean runs around the entire earth, starting from the East, but they don’t show any evidence for the assertion” (4.8.2). However the key point of contention here is contained in the phrase “runs around the entire earth,” γῆν περι πᾶσαν ῥέειν, repeated verbatim from the earlier critique (2. 21). Ocean is characterized by its adherents

which have *never been seen*, is somewhat sharper and hence more useful for my purposes here.

¹⁰ 2.28–29, 3.115.1, 4.8.2, 4.32. A further, less prominent case involves the Scythian report of goat-footed men and men who sleep for half the year (4.25.1), where the tribes in question lie behind a veil of impassable mountains. Herodotus simply rejects these stories, without inquiring into how they got started; since they have no place in the mythic record he seems uninterested in them.

¹¹ This section has been poorly understood by some commentators, who claim, for example, that “Herodotus rightly rejects the theory of the circumambient Ocean as unsupported by the evidence” (How and Wells [above, note 3] 169–70; see also Bunbury [above, note 3] 165). In fact, lack of evidence is cited here not as grounds for refutation, but as a shield against it. For the meaning of ἔλεγχος here see G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge, 1979) 253 and n. 118.

¹² Herodotus uses the terms οἰκός and οἰκότης frequently in speculative geography, especially in discussing theories concerning the Nile (2.22.2, 2.24.2, 2.25.2 and 5, 2.27). At 3.111.1 and 4.195.4 the evidence of οἰκότης and λόγος οἰκότης is explicitly ranked as a “second best” form of inquiry, where hard information is lacking. See How and Wells (above, note 3) 170, Bunbury (above, note 3) 165.

as a confluent body, the “river which flows back on itself (ἄψόρος)” according to its poetic epithet, whereas Herodotus sees possible gaps in its circuit at the eastern and northern quadrants of the earth.¹³ Thus the debate is not over the general idea that the earth is surrounded by water—Herodotus acknowledges that this is true, at least for the greater part of the world—but whether those waters form a continuous circle. The issue of circularity then becomes critical in the next and final discussion of Ocean, a passage which, as we have seen, adjoins our key sentence regarding Hyperboreans and Hypernotians (the juxtaposition will be explored further below). Here Herodotus scoffs at those who “draw Ocean running around an earth which is rounder than a circle drawn with a compass, and make Asia the same size as Europe” (4.36.2). This artificial roundness violates Herodotus’ sense of the οἶκος of terrestrial form,¹⁴ and thus becomes the decisive element in the case against Ocean;¹⁵ the initial critique based on sources of evidence only renders the legend vulnerable to this further attack.

Much the same sequence of argument, moving from an empirical ‘cold trail’ to a refutation based on τὸ οἶκος, can be illustrated in Herodotus’ second inquiry into the lore of the unseen world, which involves the river Eridanus and the Tin Islands:

οὔτε γὰρ ἔγωγε ἐνδέκομαι Ἑριδανόν τινα καλέεσθαι πρὸς βαρβάρων ποταμὸν ἐκδιδόντα ἐς θάλασσαν τὴν πρὸς βορέην ἄνεμον, ἀπ’ ὅτε τοῦ ἡλεκτρον φοιτᾶν λόγος ἐστὶ, οὔτε νήσους οἶδα Κασσιτερίδας εἰούσας, ἐκ τῶν ὁ κασσίτερος ἡμῖν φοιτᾶ. τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ ὁ Ἑριδανὸς αὐτὸ κατηγορεῖ τὸ οὐνομα ὥς ἔστι Ἑλληνικὸν καὶ οὐ βάρβαρον, ὑπὸ ποιητέῳ δέ τινος ποιηθέν· τοῦτο δὲ οὐδενὸς αὐτόπτεω γενομένου δύναμαι ἀκοῦσαι, τοῦτο μελετῶν, ὅπως θάλασσά ἐστι τὰ ἐπέκεινα τῆς Ἑυρώπης. (3.115.1–2)

Here, a logical improbability inherent in the name “Eridanus,” in addition to lack of evidence, renders the legend invalid; in fact, the linguistic argument is clearly marked as complementary to the empirical one by the μέν...δέ construction in which they are framed. In the case of the Tin Islands, by contrast, where lack of evidence is the only issue at stake, Herodotus seems to take a less anti-theoretical stance, asserting “I don’t know” rather than “I reject”; but in any event the two legends are so closely intertwined in his eyes that the argument against

¹³ 1.204.1, 4.45.1; see Rennell (above, note 3) 195. At 3.115.1 Herodotus expresses doubt about the western coast as well, but by this he must mean only the Northwest, since he elsewhere shows familiarity with the Pillars of Heracles (4.49). Myres (above, note 1 [1896], 608 and 624) mistakenly attributes to Herodotus a view that Europe is circumnavigable, based on a forced reading of 3.115 and 4.45; Myres seems to think that when Herodotus says “no one knows if Europe is surrounded by water,” he means that this is in fact true but has yet to be proven.

¹⁴ Cf. von Fritz (above, note 6) 326.

¹⁵ Correctly perceived by Brown (above, note 6) 75: “[Herodotus] ridicules the view...that the river [Nile] flows from an outer sea, because the Ocean stream idea makes the surface of the earth ‘round, as though it had been turned on a lathe.’” See also van Paassen (above, note 5) 138–42, who puts the case exactly the wrong way around: “His criticism was directed not so much at the diagrammatisation of Hecataeus’ map of the world as against the mythological elements it contained.” William Arthur Heidel (*The Frame of the Ancient Greek Maps* [New York 1937] 11–12) believes that the maps to which Herodotus refers were not really circular, despite his explicit phrasing in the passage above.

the Eridanus effectively sinks the Tin Islands as well. As in the case of Ocean, then, Herodotus here uses the empirical argument only to question, rather than refute, a geographic myth; and where evidence gives out, he relies on his own sense of τὸ οἰκός to distinguish true from false.

One further example, taken not from the realm of the unseen but from that of distant report, will help to solidify this formulation. Herodotus goes to some trouble to trace the story of the Arimaspians, the one-eyed griffin-fighters said to live just south of the Hyperboreans, to its origin among the Issedones, a tribe living on the very edge of the investigable world. The Issedones are known to pass the story along to the Scythians—whence the Arimaspians get their name, “One-eyes” in the Scythian tongue—who in turn relay it at third hand to the Greeks (4.27). The whole account of the story’s transmission has been taken as an empirically-based rejection of the Arimaspians; however, Herodotus ultimately dismisses them for a different reason, because he “cannot believe that there are men who have only one eye, but are physically normal in other respects (3.116).” Clearly, the burden of proof for such fabulous tales finally rests on their conformity to τὸ οἰκός, even after their remote origin has initially called them into question.

The refutations of these unseen and unreliable legends are important to us here in that they are frequently adduced as parallels to Herodotus’ treatment of the Hyperboreans. Indeed, Herodotus’ introduction to the Hyperborean *logos* seems, at first glance, to make such a parallel inescapable; for here he methodically eliminates all primary sources of information,¹⁶ and traces the legend instead to epic poetry instead:

Ὑπερβορέων δὲ περὶ ἀνθρώπων οὔτε τι σκῦθαι λέγουσι οὐδὲν οὔτε τινὲς ἄλλοι τῶν ταύτῃ οἰκημένων, εἰ μὴ ἄρα Ἴσσηδόνες· ὥς δ’ ἐγὼ δοκέω, οὐδ’ οὔτοι λέγουσι οὐδέν· ἔλεγον γὰρ ἂν καὶ σκῦθαι, ὥς περὶ τῶν μονοφθάλμων λέγουσι. ἀλλ’ Ἡσιόδῳ μὲν ἔστι περὶ Ὑπερβορέων εἰρημένα, ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ὀμήρῳ ἐν Ἐπιγόνοισι, εἰ δὴ τῷ ἐόντι γε Ὀμηρος ταῦτα τὰ ἔπεα ἐποίησε. (4.32)

Once we have recognized that mere lack of evidence is never a decisive argument for Herodotus, though, we need not see the attribution to Homer and Hesiod here as a refutation of the Hyperboreans, despite the seeming parallel between this and similar attributions in the discussions of Ocean and Eridanus. Indeed, it must be objected to such a parallel that here we find no explicit or polemical expression of skepticism, as we did in those earlier investigations. Thus, whereas Herodotus elsewhere charges the poets with having “invented” or “created” the names of Ocean and Eridanus, on this occasion he says only that “there is mention” of the Hyperboreans in Homer and Hesiod. Nor can it be argued that Herodotus’ references to the poets are always, or self-evidently, pejorative, for in a passage only three chapters prior to this one (4.29) he cites the *Odyssey* as a legitimate geographic authority (in discussing the absence of

¹⁶ Such must be the import of λέγουσι οὐδέν in both of the first two periods, as understood by many of the commentators (e.g. J. C. F. Bachr, *Herodoti Musae* v. 2 [Leipzig 1857] 358, K. Abicht, *Herodotus* v. 2.2 [Leipzig 1886] 31); to take the phrase in its more usual sense of “speak nonsense” would render οὐδ’ οὔτοι λέγουσι οὐδέν unintelligible. It is curious that Herodotus introduces the Issedones as a possible source of information, only to reject this possibility in the next moment; Macan sees a tip of the hat to Aristaeas here (above, note 9, 24).

horns on Scythian cattle), and in the entire opening section of Book 4 he takes information from the epic poet Aristeas without raising any question of its credibility (4.13, e.g.).¹⁷ At the least, it must be admitted that if he means to charge the poets with fraud in the case of the Hyperboreans, he has certainly framed the accusation in uncharacteristically neutral terms.

A further distinction arises, moreover, from Herodotus' failure, at least in this introduction to the Hyperborean *logos*, to raise the sort of argument from τὸ οἶκος which had allowed him to condemn earlier myths. For example, the issue of nomenclature, which might have shown that the Hyperboreans, like the Eridanus, were a native Greek invention, is not mentioned, nor do the Hyperboreans present any anatomical peculiarity such as had told against the one-eyed Arimaspians. In fact, Herodotus ignores all of the more fabulistic elements of the Hyperborean legend, not only in this introduction, but throughout the *logos* which follows. There is no mention of the material he would have found in Pindar,¹⁸ for example—the tremendously long lifespan of the Hyperboreans, their use of asses in sacrifice, their fellowship with Apollo and Leda, the paradisaical splendor of their home. These omissions are telling: Had Herodotus intended to debunk the Hyperboreans, he could have done so quite easily by showing them to be in clear violation of τὸ οἶκος.¹⁹ Instead, Herodotus recounts a set of more credible tales (to which we shall return momentarily) collected on the island of Delos, revealing nothing exceptional about them other than their extreme remoteness from Greece.

So long as Herodotus does not raise any οἶκος-based objections to the Hyperboreans, they remain an investigation *sui generis*, separate from all other examples of mythic geography: Here alone Herodotus would be able neither to support nor dismiss his case. For this reason, it now becomes imperative for us to specify the meaning of the sentence which concludes the discussion, Εἰ δὲ εἰσι ὑπερβόρεοί τινες ἄνθρωποι, εἰσὶ καὶ ὑπερνότιοι ἄλλοι. Only here, if anywhere, is an οἶκος-based argument brought to bear against the validity of the myth; up to this point, Herodotus' investigation has established only a lack of empirical evidence, that is, οὐκ ἔχει ἔλεγχον, not οὐκ ἔστιν. Do the Hyperboreans supply him at last with the resolution he has been seeking?

Before moving to this troublesome sentence, however, we must briefly take account of the material we are passing over, the tales gathered by Herodotus on Delos. Here the historian records a religious cult centered on what were said to be Hyperborean grave sites, and local lore describing mysterious offerings, wrapped in wheat-straw, brought to the island by relay from the Hyperboreans. Unfortunately this Delian evidence (4.32–35), which actually occupies the greatest portion of the Hyperborean *logos*, establishes nothing conclusive regarding Herodotus' doubt or credulity, but two points about it suggest he is leaning toward the latter. First, the very plenitude and specificity of this

¹⁷ On the importance of poetry in defining the northern landscape, see Seth Benardete, *Herodotean Inquiries* (The Hague 1969) 104–9. For Herodotus' reliance on Aristeas for much of his septentrional material, see James Bolton, *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (Oxford 1962) 42–44.

¹⁸ *Ol.* 3. 17–45, *Pyth.* 10. 29–46, fr. 272; cf. also Alcaeus fr. 1. Unfortunately the two sources Herodotus himself cites, Hesiod and the Homeric *Epigoni*, have been lost, although the Hesiodic reference may have been recovered in fr. 150 Merkelbach-West (20–21).

¹⁹ A. Riese, in *Die Idealisierung der Naturvölker des Nordens in der griechischen und römische Litteratur* (Frankfurt 1875) 14–16, notes that Herodotus actually portrays the Getes and Thracians in a more exotic light than the Hyperboreans.

material, including such concrete testimonia as parcels apparently sent by Hyperborean hands, show Herodotus considering the whole question rather seriously; to recount the Delian traditions at such length, only to end by declaring it all a huge hoax, would seem a willful and misleading way to proceed.²⁰ Herodotus' tone becomes even more strongly marked as affirmative, furthermore, when the historian himself steps in to support the account of the straw-wrapped offerings, claiming to know personally (οἶδα δὲ αὐτός, 4.33.5) of a similar practice among the Thracians. This evidence from comparative ethnology does not in itself prove anything, but Herodotus' insistence on citing it, and on guaranteeing its veracity (cf. 4.34.1), indicates that he is looking for reasons to believe the Delians rather than to refute them. With these tonal cues noted, however, we must pass on to the more directly relevant "coda" chapter quoted at the outset of this discussion (4.36).

II

We have already looked briefly at the interpretive controversy surrounding the second sentence of 4.36.1, a sentence we may for convenience refer to as the Hypernotian condition. Scholars have usually attributed contrafactual force to this sentence, despite its construction in the present indicative. We shall have to deal both with attempts to infer the tone of the sentence from those which precede and follow it, and with assumptions about its geographic and climatological background.

A first point, concerning the omission of Abaris at the opening of the chapter, can be dealt with in short order. Herodotus gives no reasons for the omission, but we must not therefore assume, as some interpreters have done,²¹ that the story has been rejected as an absurdity. Herodotus has numerous motives for not telling us what he knows,²² but disbelief is not among them. Indeed, his narrative principle, as expressed on two separate occasions in the *Histories*, is γράφειν (or λέγειν) τὰ λεγόμενα (2.123.1, 7.152.3) no matter how egregiously such stories may exceed plausibility; we can point to places where he retails a legend even while finding it absurd,²³ but none where he withholds one for that reason. It seems likely, then, that Herodotus simply looks upon Abaris as a side issue which he does not have enough evidence, or

²⁰ Pliny the Elder, for example, takes the story of the straw-wrapped offerings as confirmation of the legend's veracity (*Historia Naturalis* 4.19). It is hard to believe that Herodotus would not have anticipated such a response from his readers and taken steps to discourage it, had such been his intent.

²¹ E.g. Jacoby (above, note 3) col. 385; B. A. van Groningen, *Herodotus' Historiën* v. 2 (Leiden 1950) 21.

²² Examples collected by H. Drexler, *Herodot-Studien* (Hildesheim 1972) 62–64. In most cases Herodotus withholds names rather than stories, in an effort to prevent scandal. At 1.193.4 he declines to tell the height of Babylonian grain crops, but the issue there is his audience's skepticism rather than his own.

²³ E.g. 2.21–22, 4.5–6, 4.77. From what we can glean of it (see A. Dryoff, "Abaris," *Philol.* 59 [1900] 610–14), the story of Abaris, a semidivine wonder-worker, must have been similar to those of Aristaeas (4.14–15) and Salmoxis (4.95–96), stories which Herodotus retells in full, and on at least one of which he suspends judgement (4.96.1).

perhaps enough time,²⁴ to treat fully. The *praeteritio* does not, therefore, help establish a skeptical or dismissive tone for the paragraph which follows.

The reading of the next sentence, however—our crucial Hypernotian condition—depends on a wider and more complex set of considerations, which were already causing interpretive problems as early as the 2nd century B.C. In fact it will be worth our while to start our examination with these early readings, since they have, rightly or wrongly, influenced more recent ones. Eratosthenes of Cyrene, as we know from Strabo, believed that this sentence amounted to a rejection of the Hyperboreans, albeit an illogical one. He attacked the argument as a fallacious attempt to make the non-existence of one entity depend on the non-existence of its opposite, i.e. “There are no ἐπιχαιρεκάκοι because there are no ἐπιχαιραγάθοι” (fr. I.B.21 Berger). Anyway, he added, there actually *are* Hypernotians, that is, the Aithiopians, whom he imagines living beyond the source of the South Wind; in other words Herodotus had misguidedly rejected the Hyperboreans because he failed to properly identify their opposite number. Unfortunately Eratosthenes’ analysis is itself logically unsound,²⁵ and seems to prove only that Herodotus *should* have believed in the Hyperboreans rather than that he did not. Thus it contributes little to our efforts here, beyond revealing that Myres’ reading of the sentence was already current among Alexandrian scholars of the Hellenistic era.

Strabo, in a discussion of Eratosthenes’ analysis (1.3.22), agrees that Herodotus meant to dismiss the Hyperboreans, but reads the argument as an attack on the excesses of the epic poets rather than as earnest geographical speculation. Herodotus had deliberately situated the Hyperboreans in the impossible locale designated by their name, in “the land where Boreas does not blow,” as a satire on the whole idea of tramontane wind shelters (in which Strabo refuses to believe). According to Strabo’s view, Herodotus could have accepted the Hyperboreans not by counterbalancing them with the Aithiopians, but by moving them inside the circle of the known world, that is, by interpreting ὑπερβόρειοι to mean simply βορειότατοι, “furthest north.” This reading seems more coherent than that of Eratosthenes, and in fact several modern interpreters have adopted it.²⁶ Others, however, have pointed out, quite correctly, that Herodotus nowhere indicates that either Hyperboreans or Hypernotians live in the regions suggested by their names,²⁷ or even implies that such windless

²⁴ Indeed, he signals at the end of this paragraph his hurry to get back to the main topic, the Scythians, by promising to be brief (ἐν ὀλίγοις... δηλώσω) in his further digression on the world-map.

²⁵ Eratosthenes’ analogue for Herodotus’ argument seems entirely specious, since the concept of ἐπιχαιραγάθια can exist even if the word does not (see Casaubon [above, note 2] ad loc., and Berger [above, note 5] 77). The second point seems more reasonable, and indeed, we too may well ask why Herodotus did not identify the Aithiopians as his hypothetical Hypernotians, since he located them in the farthest South (3.17.1), and their role in mythology made them a natural counterpart (see Hadas [above, note 3] 115–16).

²⁶ E.g. Baehr (above, note 16) 367, and C. S. Wheeler, *Herodotus* v. 1 (Boston 1842) 415.

²⁷ Although taken literally by Pindar (*Ol.* 3.31), the word ὑπερβόρεος could be construed more loosely even in Herodotus’ time, as noted by Casaubon (above, note 2) 434: Aeschylus uses it (*Choe.* 373) simply of “extreme” good fortune, and in *Hom. Hymn* 7 it occurs in the unremarkable sequence, “Egypt, or Cyprus, or the Hyperboreans, or even further” (29–30). Much later, Dionysius Periegetes

havens exist.²⁸ In fact, he seems to duck the question deliberately by avoiding all mention of the perfect climate which legend attributed to the Hyperboreans, and of the Rhipaeen Mountains which allegedly separated them from the blast of the North Wind.²⁹ Such omissions have the effect of domesticating the Hyperboreans in exactly the way Strabo advises, placing them “farthest north” rather than “beyond Boreas,” so that this reading too finally proves only that the Hyperboreans should be acceptable within Herodotus’ scheme.³⁰

If neither of these ancient geographers helps elucidate the meaning of the Hypernotian condition, however, they at least establish the grounds on which it can conceivably be translated as a counterfactual: Although unmarked grammatically, it may posit a situation which both author and audience understand to be wholly unreal, as in, “If there are Hyperboreans then the moon is made of green cheese.”³¹ In an effort to establish this form of unreality, some commentators, for example R. W. Macan, have assumed that “Hypermotians” are impossible for climatological reasons: “The intense heat of the South makes such an

uses Herodotus’ ὑπερνότιος (151) without any connotation more exotic than “far to the south,” and without provoking comment from the scholiast.

²⁸See S. Casson, “The Hyperboreans,” *CR* 34 (1920) 1–3, who ascribes to Herodotus a “rational view...according to which Hyperboreans and Hypernotians represented respectively the northern and southern fringes of the inhabited world, and served only as geographical terms” (2); cf. also Berger (above, note 5) 77. It is far from certain that Herodotus would have found windless zones implausible even if he had paused to consider them, since such sober-minded authorities as Eratosthenes and Aristotle (*Meteor.* 361B) accepted the idea.

²⁹Cited by Bunbury (above, note 3) 175 as evidence that Herodotus disbelieved this legend also, but wrongly; Herodotus also neglects to mention the Volga, a river whose existence he could scarcely have doubted (see Tozer [above, note 3] 88). Bolton (above, note 17) 42 observes that the nameless “high mountains” mentioned by Herodotus at 4.23.2 could be the Rhipaeans, but if so they have been entirely demythologized.

³⁰We may perhaps ascribe both these misreadings to the tendentious nature of ancient geographical debate, since both serve to advance the particular ideologies of their respective authors. Eratosthenes, for example, the great debunker of Homer, who had scorned the *Odyssey* as an ἐξωκεανισμός or “journey into the (mythical realm of) Ocean” (Strabo 1.2.12–19), seems to have adopted Herodotus as an ally in skepticism who had rejected not only Ocean but other, more exotic legends as well. Strabo, for his part, takes the opposite approach, making Herodotus a worthless fabulist (1.2.35, e.g.) who had failed to perceive that myths must be treated as allegories, containing valid information about the earth but in exaggerated form. Thus he bolsters his own allegorical revisionism by making Herodotus an over-literal reader of Homer and Hesiod.

³¹H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Harvard 1956) §2298 b (p. 517); R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführlich Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*³ v. 2.2 (Hannover 1904) §573 a n. 1 (pp. 466–67); W. W. Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (N.Y. 1896) §404 (p. 146). Herodotus himself supplies an excellent example of such a condition, in a sentence attributed to Prexaspes: εἰ μὲν νυν οἱ τεθνεώτες ἀνεστήασι, προσδέκεό τοι καὶ Ἀστυάγεα τὸν Μῆδον ἐπαναστήσεσθαι (3.62.4; cf. Dem. 18.12, Plat. *Phaedr.* 228A). For the logical issues involved, see David K. Lewis, *Counterfactuals* (Harvard 1973) 24–26, and Robert C. Stalnaker, “Indicative Conditions,” in *Ifs: Conditions, Belief, Decision, Chance, and Time*, ed. W. L. Harper, R. C. Stalnaker, and G. Pearce (London 1981) 193–210.

hypothesis inadmissible, and the argument is a *reductio ad absurdum*.³² Against this argument, however, it must be conceded that Herodotus does not clearly define or espouse a consistent scheme of climatology in which the southern latitudes would be unbearably hot. Thus he can speak of a Phoenician voyage around the tip of Libya (4.42) or of "long-lived" Aithiopians who dwell on its southern coast (ἐπὶ τῇ νοτίῃ θαλάσῃ, 3.17.1),³³ without raising the issue of heat; and although Herodotus' earth in general grows hotter as one moves southward and colder in the North,³⁴ nevertheless mankind remains surprisingly comfortable, adaptable, and even prosperous at the extremes of either direction, the so-called ἔσχατιάι explored at 3.106–16.³⁵

In short, these various attempts to make problems of wind and cold the central issue of the Hypernotian condition come to naught, since Herodotus shows little consciousness of the torrid and frozen zones defined by his Hellenistic successors. On the other hand climate does interest him here, as elsewhere, to the extent that it creates a symmetrical opposition between northern and southern halves of the globe. Thus, only a few chapters prior to the one before us (4.29), Herodotus had hypothesized that the growth of a cow's horns must be impeded by cold, since it is accelerated by heat; and in his explanation for the flooding of the Nile in Book 2, he envisions a similarly bipolar scheme, in which the south and north winds, and the climates they represent, could be made to exchange global positions. Indeed, this latter scenario bears a close comparison with our Hypernotian condition:

εἰ δὲ ἡ στάσις ἡλλακτο τῶν ὥρέων καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τῇ μὲν
νῦν ὁ βορέης τε καὶ ὁ χειμῶν ἐστᾶσι, ταύτῃ μὲν τοῦ νότου ἦν
ἡ στάσις καὶ τῆς μεσαμβρίας, τῇ δὲ ὁ νότος νῦν ἐστηκε,
ταύτῃ δὲ ὁ βορέης, εἰ ταῦτα οὕτως εἶχε, ὁ ἥλιος ἂν

³² Above, note 9, 24. The same theory is proposed, though only tentatively, by How and Wells (above, note 3) 316: "Symmetry would require us to believe in 'Hypernotians' also; but this is neither asserted (nor possible on account of extreme heat?). Therefore there are no Hyperboreans." The question mark with which they qualify their assertion itself reveals that no convincing evidence can be produced in its support.

³³ There has been some confusion as to the whereabouts of these "long-lived" Aithiopians, largely as a result of Herodotus' own inconsistent use of the term νοτίῃ θαλάσῃ. Twice (2.158.4, 4.37.1) this body of water is equated with the Red Sea, but at other times (4.13.2, 4.42.3) the two are distinct. In this particular case, it is clear from the phrase ἐς τὰ ἔσχατα γῆς (3.25.1) that the southernmost coast of Africa is meant.

³⁴ Herodotus conjectures at 4.31 and 5.9 that extreme cold renders the North devoid of habitation, taken by Berger (above, note 5) 124–26 as evidence of a 'frozen zone' conception. However, in both cases, his major concern is in finding ad hoc explanations for exotic legends regarding the northern frontier, not in constructing a general scheme of world climate. On the whole, it is safer to say, with How and Wells (above, note 3) 435, that "Herodotus treats as independent facts forces like the winds or peculiarities of climate...He has no conception that there are general laws of atmospheric pressure."

³⁵ Henry Wood attempts an argument along lines similar to Macan's: Herodotus demonstrates empirically in his other ethnographic surveys that no Hypernotians exist, thereby rendering his apodosis here inherently unreal (*The Histories of Herodotus* [The Hague 1972] 104). However, since Herodotus clearly leaves room in his ethnographic map of Libya for tribes which are as yet unknown to the Greeks, such as the 'wizards' supposedly encountered by a Nasamonian expedition (2.32), this argument too proves untenable.

ἀπελαυνόμενος ἐκ μέσου τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὑπὸ τοῦ χειμῶνος καὶ τοῦ βορέω ἦτε ἂν τὰ ἄνω τῆς Εὐρώπης κατὰ περ νῦν τῆς Λιβύης ἔρχεται, διεξιόντα δ' ἂν μιν διὰ πάσης Εὐρώπης ἔλπομαι ποίειν ἂν τὸν Ἴστρον τὰ περ νῦν ἐργάζεται τὸν Νεῖλον. (2.26.2)

This condition is, of course, explicitly contrafactual; but its assumption that Boreas and Notus “stand” directly opposite one another, on opposite sides of the earth, suggests that (in Herodotus’ view) the peoples associated with these climatic extremes may do likewise.

Herodotus’ pervasive interest in the correspondences between North/Boreas/cold and South/Notus/heat thus leads us to treat the Hypernotian condition as an argument about global symmetry rather than about wind and temperature. However even after restricting the argument in this way we still find ourselves in a dilemma, since scholarly opinion divides over whether Herodotus supports or rejects ‘Hypernotian’ symmetry, and either path presents difficulties. If we start from the former assumption, as do How and Wells—that “symmetry would require us to believe in Hypernotians”—we must needs find a reason why such belief is untenable (if we are to continue to read the condition as contrary-to-fact), and no such reason has been convincingly adduced. More importantly, we face a problem of consistency when we move on to the very next sentence, the polemic against the round map of the earth, in which the principle of world symmetry seems to be not endorsed but explicitly rejected; that is, we confront the difficulty noted, but left unexplained, by How and Wells: “It is curious to see Herodotus appealing to the very symmetry which three lines later he denounces.”³⁶

Recognizing this difficulty, Philippe Legrand³⁷ has proposed to read 4.36.1 as a parody of archaic geographical speculation, spoken ironically in the voice of a Hecataeus or a Damastes: “C’est du moins ce que devraient prétendre, pour être conséquents, les amateurs de combinaisons symétriques a priori dont se moque ici Hérodote.” This ingenious solution does indeed make the two sentences cohere as part of a single attack on geometric and speculative geography. However, such an attack cannot be reconciled with other sections of the *Histories* in which North-South symmetry, archaic and speculative though it may appear, forms a legitimate basis for deduction. Since the Boreas/Notus correlation is elsewhere accepted as valid, for example in the Book 2 passage quoted just above, there is no basis for Legrand’s assumption that the idea of Hypernotian/Hyperborean symmetry is inherently ridiculous to Herodotus and could not have been asserted in the historian’s own persona.

It would seem, then, that glaring inconsistencies in geographic theory result from following either of the readings which take symmetry to be the central issue of the Hypernotian condition; 4.36.1 can be reconciled either to the Nile *logos*, or to the polemic against the round map, but not to both. These apparent inconsistencies are particularly troubling, moreover, inasmuch as they involve an issue which obviously evokes strong feelings from Herodotus, and on which he has taken some pains to present his views. Thus, if we are to avoid the “defeatist” position to which some have resigned themselves—that Herodotus’

³⁶ Above, note 3, 316. The difficulty of the juxtaposition is also remarked by Jacoby (above, note 3) col. 306, and van Groningen (above, note 21) 21.

³⁷ Cf. his Budé edition, *Hérodote: Histoires*, v. 4 (Paris 1945) 69 n. 3, and the further comments in “Herodotea” (above, note 3). The same view is expounded by H. Stein, *Herodotos* v. 2.2 (Berlin 1877) 38, and Abicht (above, note 24) 35.

geography cannot be held to any firm principles, and that he may in fact be capable of espousing contrary ideas in consecutive sentences—we must find a way to bridge 4.36.1 and 4.36.2, without at the same time doing violence to the notion of symmetry adduced in the *logos* on the Nile. This shall be my task in the final section of this discussion.

III

Our first step in connecting 4.36.1 and 4.36.2 is to discard all attempts to construe them as part of a single argument, or to subordinate one to the other in logical sequence. The Hypnotian condition seems rather to have been inserted as a parenthetical statement, appended after the close of the Hyperborean *logos* (τὰυτα μὲν Ὑπερβορέων περὶ εἰρήσθω) and before the opening of the next topic (γελῶ δὲ ὀρέων γῆς περιόδους γράψαντας). That is, Herodotus includes it almost as an aside or afterthought, loosely adjoining the Hyperborean *logos*, rather than as an essential link connecting it to what follows; a free-handed translator might consider rendering it as a footnote.³⁸ Moreover, it accompanies another, similar footnote, the capsule description of the Abaris story, which is itself so far out of the chain of argument that one recent editor has excised it from the text.³⁹ In fact, the entire chapter is structured not as a tricolon series of refutations, expanding in scope—"I don't believe in Abaris, or the Hyperboreans generally, or the circular world-map"—but as an antithesis between old and new topics of discussion, "So much for the Hyperboreans, now on to cartography," in which two subsidiary issues, Abaris and the possibility of Hypnotians, have intruded into the intermediate space.

This structure becomes more intelligible once we recognize that the δέ of the Hypnotian condition does not answer to the μὲν of τὰυτα μὲν εἰρήσθω, but in fact intervenes between it and its true correlate, γελῶ δὲ ὀρέων. Hyperbata of this kind are normal enough where μὲν...δέ marks a transition from one topic to another,⁴⁰ as is the case here, where Herodotus uses his standard formula for effecting such transitions: τὰυτα μὲν περὶ (old topic) εἰρήσθω· (new topic) δέ...⁴¹ If we are to reconstruct the train of thought governing this passage in a manner consistent with Herodotus' other uses of this formula, the δέ of 4.36.2 should in fact be translated as an adversative, or better still as a paragraph break.⁴² Confusion over this point has arisen because here alone, Herodotus varies the μὲν...δέ transition by inserting a parenthesis containing a δέ of its own between old and new topics; furthermore the issue of

³⁸ Myres (1896, above note 1, 606) recommends devices of this kind to editors of Herodotus, as a way of clearing up confusions created by the author's paratactic style.

³⁹ Rosen, in the new Teubner edition (above, note 2).

⁴⁰ See LSJ s.v. μὲν, section 1; Denniston unfortunately does not address the subject. Good examples can be cited from Xenophon, e.g. *Mem.* 1.1.2–1.2.1, separating the two counts of the indictment against Socrates, and 1.3.1–1.3.5, separating the discussions of Socrates' religious behavior and his lifestyle in general.

⁴¹ Used seven times in the first four books alone: 1.92.4, 2.34.2, 2.76.3, 3.113.1, 4.15.4, 4.45.5, 4.199.2.

⁴² Aubrey de Selincourt, for one, inserts such a break in his Penguin translation (*Herodotus: The Histories* [N.Y. 1972] 282), and Walter Blanco informs me that he plans to do likewise in his forthcoming translation for the Norton Critical Edition series.

world symmetry raised in this parenthesis has obliquely suggested the discussion of the circular world-map which follows,⁴³ creating an exceptionally tangled and easily misconstrued sequence of argument.⁴⁴ Despite these anomalies, however, we must refrain from seeing any strict connection between the parenthesis and the transition into which it intrudes; nor can we subordinate the old topic (Hyperboreans) to the new (circular map), since, in every other instance of the ταῦτα μὲν εἰρήσθω formula, no stronger link than a paratactic “speaking of which” is intended.

We can further explain the transition between 4.36.1 and 4.36.2 by pointing out that the symmetrical constructs Herodotus considers in these two sentences strike him as fundamentally different, and that he therefore changes tone abruptly as he moves from one to the next. As we have seen above, most prominently in the scenario describing the reversal of the North and South Winds, Herodotus relies heavily on climate as the organizing principle of world structure,⁴⁵ so that North-South correspondences appeal to him as naturally οἰκότα. East and West, however, defined by the risings and settings of the sun rather than by winds and temperatures, do not mirror one another to nearly the same degree;⁴⁶ therefore the geometry of the circle improperly extends that of the latitudinal line⁴⁷ in that nothing about it conforms with τὸ οἰκός. Thus, although the symmetrical constructs of 4.36.1 and 4.36.2 have seemed to modern readers to be closely akin if not identical, Herodotus actually has intelligible reasons for embracing the first while rejecting the second. In fact, the degree to which North-South predominates over East-West symmetry in Herodotus’ mind can be seen in other passages of the *Histories*, where he locates the ἑσχατίαι or “edges of the earth” at the climatic extremes of North and South (3.106–16), and defines the center of the earth at the zone of mediation between them (3.106, 1.142.2).⁴⁸ Nowhere in the *Histories*, significantly, does he subscribe to the

⁴³ That is, in both the Hyperborean condition and in the reference to Abaris, who traveled all around the world (κατὰ πᾶσαν γῆν) in a circle as sweeping as that of the river Ocean.

⁴⁴ Further obfuscation arises from the fact that our Greek texts include the entire sequence within a single chapter, whereas, ordinarily, a chapter division separates old and new topics. Quite possibly Jungermans, who introduced the chapter divisions in his 1608 Frankfurt edition, failed to glimpse the proper run of the passage, and hence obscured it for all later readers.

⁴⁵ On this whole subject see Guy Lachenaud, “Connaissance du monde et représentations de l’espace dans Hérodote,” *Hellenica* 32 (1980) 42–60, esp. 49–52; Berger (above, note 3) 118–29; and Heidel (above, note 15) 18–20, 53–55.

⁴⁶ In fact, the positions of sunrise and sunset, far from being distinctively east-west markers, can themselves be used to designate North and South, due to the procession of the equinoxes; see, for example, Hippocrates *De aëre* 12.

⁴⁷ Herodotus constructs these East-West lines wherever possible, for instance in tracing the upper course of the Nile (2.34), in dividing Europe from Asia (4.42), and throughout the entire ethnography of Libya (esp. 4.181–86); see Bunbury (above, note 3) 162–63. Some have seen the rudimentary notion of a meridian line in the passage which links the mouths of the Nile and Ister (2.33).

⁴⁸ It is remarkable that Herodotus virtually ignores East and West in this digression and focuses rather on the lands which, according to the formulation of the opening sentence, are climatically farthest removed from temperate Greece. He does, to be sure, discuss India, but gives remarkably little attention to this exotic realm (see Bunbury [above, note 3] 231). As for the West, Herodotus does not even bother to mention the Cynetes and Celts among the ἑσχατίαι, tribes which he elsewhere considers ἑσχατοὶ in this direction (4.49).

popular belief in the centrality of Delphi, predicated as it was on an abstract symmetry of East and West rather than on the natural and οἰκότα correspondences of North and South.⁴⁹

That the Hypernotian condition ultimately depends on climatic rather than purely geometric symmetry allows us not only to distinguish it from Ocean, but to link it with a different exploration of speculative geography: Herodotus' investigation into the source of the Nile (2.29–34). Here too, as we have already seen, the correspondence of North/Boreas/cold and South/Notus/heat becomes a central consideration, and here too Herodotus draws a stark contrast between this correspondence and the more venturesome, geometric symmetry of Ocean (2.21, 23). Moreover, the connection between these two excurses is strengthened by their parallel position as preludes to the *logoi* that contain them, the ethnographies of Egypt and Scythia. Since the Egyptian and Scythian books have recently been shown to mirror each other in a number of important ways,⁵⁰ as determined by the larger symmetry of hot and cold climates which governs them, we might well expect this structural correlation to include the explorations of their furthest regions—places which, it should be noted, had already been linked by Pindar as eschatological twins (*Isthm.* 6.22–23 b).⁵¹

Indeed, upon closer examination, we find that Herodotus provides an explicit verbal signal of the close tie between the Nilotic and Hyperborean investigations. In the first he proposes to conduct his inquiry ἐπὶ μακρότατον, “to the outer limit” both of geographical space and empirical data (2.29.1), while the second forms the capstone of a similar journey ἐπὶ μακρότατον (4.16.1).⁵² Both inquiries, moreover, bring Herodotus to borders designated by his text as τὰ μακρότατα (2.32.3, 4.31.2). The linguistic echoes are significant in that they highlight the methodology pursued in both passages: Herodotus attempts to push beyond the cognitive limits established by ὄψις and ἀκοή into the realm of the ἀφανές. Such transgressions are, in part, the natural result of all Herodotus' inquiries into the πείρατα γαίης, as we have seen. But the extremes of South and North form especially revealing cases, since, in both directions, the boundaries of empirical knowledge had been fixed at clearly

⁴⁹ According to legend (probably first recorded by Pindar), Delphi had been revealed as the center of the earth after two eagles, flying from the extreme East and extreme West, had met at that spot; see Pausanias 10.5.9 and Plutarch *De Pyth. Orac.* 402 d, and, on Herodotus' omission, How and Wells (above, note 3) 437.

⁵⁰ E.g. in Benardete (above, note 17) 99–132, and James Redfield, “Herodotus the Tourist,” *CP* 80 (1985) 97–118, esp. 106–11. The parallels appear to have been noted first by Karl Trüdinger, in his *Studien zur Geschichte der griechisch-römischen Ethnographie* (Basel 1918) 34–36, but have been fully outlined only in more recent work.

⁵¹ Unfortunately the connection has not been explored by modern commentators, perhaps because of a tendency to separate ‘real’ entities like the Nile from ‘mythical’ Hyperboreans. This distinction would not have been valid for Herodotus, however, who treats both entities as ‘invisibles’ requiring special forms of investigation.

⁵² The phrase ἐπὶ μακρότατον is used again at 4.192.3 in reference to the problems of exploring distant space (the southern reaches of Libya), and occurs once in the context of prehistoric time (1.171.2); but only in the above two passages does it define the course of the investigation from the outset. It is perhaps possible that the two other usages, however, and in particular that in the Libyan *logos*, imply other empirical experiments of the type I have outlined here; I have excluded them simply in an effort not to overburden the present discussion.

identifiable points; no such termini had been established in the East, as Herodotus is keenly aware (1.204.1, 3.98.2, 4.40.2, 4.44.3), and even the West seems strangely open-ended to him at 3.115.1 (despite his awareness of the Pillars of Heracles). Thus the Nile and the Hyperboreans appear to have been adopted as twin test cases for Herodotus' larger ἐπὶ μακρότατον experiment.

This verbal focus on μακρότατα in both the Nilotic and Hyperborean *logoi* is reinforced by a further, structural parallel: In each of these excursions, Herodotus follows the route of a single αὐτόπτης in order to reach the outer limits of empirical knowledge. These lone travelers—Herodotus himself in the former case, the poet Aristean in the latter—fare outward, in opposite directions, until they reach definitive stopping points—Elephantine in the South, the Issedones in the North. At those points, both eyewitnesses are driven back onto a secondary source of information, hearsay, in order to learn what lies beyond (2.29.1, 4.16.1); but in both cases the final mystery they seek remains out of reach even of hearsay. Herodotus has, in short, constructed mirror-image journeys of exploration in these two books, the former undertaken in person, the latter by way of a proxy; and the two journeys bring him to much the same place, the point at which hearsay evidence fails and the geographer finds himself thrown back onto his own deductive resources.

Since the two *logoi* are linked in these essential ways—by the climatic symmetry of North and South, and by the way in which vectors of travel demarcate the μακρότατα of empirical evidence—it should come as no surprise that their results are also closely parallel: Herodotus ends by using symmetry to fill in the blank spots on the map. Thus in the famous conclusion to the Nile *logos* he assumes “that the Nile runs through all of Libya along a course equal to that of the Ister” (2.34.2), extrapolating from the fact that the mouths of the two rivers lie opposite one another across the axis of the Mediterranean. The passage (which goes on at greater length than can be quoted here) has baffled and bemused interpreters, some of whom have seen in it an irresponsible abandonment of empirical standards of evidence. But, on the basis of the foregoing analysis, it should be clear that such reasoning from τὸ οἰκός is perfectly consistent with Herodotus' other approaches to mythic geography, and, in particular, with his solution to the problem of the Hyperboreans. In fact, Herodotus' earnestness in positing a correspondence between the Nile and the Ister—for here there can be no question of irony or *reductio ad absurdum*—may be taken as final confirmation of Casaubon's reading of the Hyperborean condition, making it an equally earnest, if more tentative,⁵³ attempt to escape an empirical dilemma by way of speculative deduction.

In sum, then, Herodotus' theory about the course of the upper Nile shares with the Hyperborean condition an unquestioning faith in the correlation of North and South, while the case of Ocean and the circular map is instead condemned by its reliance on a similar correlation of East and West. As a result, the juxtaposition of the two constructs in 4.36 must be understood not as a two-part refutation of a single notion of symmetry, but as a contrast between a plausible application of that notion, in the first instance, and a wrongheaded overextension in the second. To conclude, I would paraphrase Herodotus' argument in 4.36 as follows: “We are forced to leave the Hyperboreans an open question—although were we in a position to pursue the problem further, the

⁵³ As explained by the fact that Herodotus is in the case of the Hyperboreans dealing with two unknowns rather than one, and with information gathered at second hand rather than first.

general pattern of the earth's North-South symmetry might provide a solution, in that we would expect to find Hyperboreans as well. Speaking of symmetry, however, we should note that the current maps of the world have taken this principle too far, as I shall now reveal." With that Herodotus moves on to his next topic, leaving the Hyperboreans still shrouded in their cloak of invisibility. Having passed beyond the μακρότατα of empirical research, he is unable to come to any firm conclusion, but at least establishes that the myth remains plausible so long as it conforms to τὸ οἰκός.



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THE URINE AND THE VINE: ASTYAGES' DREAMS AT HERODOTUS 1.107–8

Ἐκδέκεται δὲ Ἀστυάγης ὁ Κυαξάρω παῖς τὴν βασιληίην. Καὶ οἱ ἐγένετο θυγάτηρ τῇ οὐνομα ἔθετο Μανδάνην, τὴν ἐδόκεε Ἀστυάγης ἐν τῷ ὕπνῳ οὐρήσαι τοσοῦτον ὥστε πληῖσαι μὲν τὴν ἑωυτοῦ πόλιν, ἐπικατακλύσαι δὲ καὶ τὴν Ἀσίην πᾶσαν. Ὑπερθέμενος δὲ τῶν μάγων τοῖσι ὄνειροπόλοισι τὸ ἐνύπνιον, ἐφοβήθη παρ' αὐτῶν αὐτὰ ἕκαστα μαθῶν. Μετὰ δὲ τὴν Μανδάνην ταύτην ἐοῦσαν ἤδη ἀνδρὸς ὡραίην Μήδων μὲν τῶν ἑωυτοῦ ἀξίων οὐδενὶ διδοῖ γυναικα, δεδοικῶς τὴν ὄψιν, ὃ δὲ Πέρση διδοῖ τῷ οὐνομα ἦν Καμβύσης, τὸν εὗρισκε οἰκίης μὲν ὄντα ἀγαθῆς, τρόπου δὲ ἡσυχίου, πολλῶ ἔνερθε ἄγων αὐτὸν μέσου ἀνδρὸς Μήδου.

Συνοικεούσης δὲ τῷ Καμβύσῃ τῆς Μανδάνης ὁ Ἀστυάγης τῷ πρώτῳ ἔτει εἶδε ἄλλην ὄψιν· ἐδόκεε [δε] οἱ ἐκ τῶν αἰδῶν τῆς θυγατρὸς ταύτης φῦναι ἀμπελον, τὴν δὲ ἀμπελον ἐπισχεῖν τὴν Ἀσίην πᾶσαν. Ἰδὼν δὲ τοῦτο καὶ ὑπερθέμενος τοῖσι ὄνειροπόλοισι μετεπέμψατο ἐκ τῶν Περσέων τὴν θυγατέρα ἐπίτοκα ἐοῦσαν, ἀπικομένην δὲ ἐφύλασσε βουλόμενος τὸ γεννώμενον ἐξ αὐτῆς διαφθεῖραι· ἐκ γὰρ οἱ τῆς ὄψιος τῶν μάγων οἱ ὄνειροπόλοι ἐσήμαινον ὅτι μέλλοι ὁ τῆς θυγατρὸς αὐτοῦ γόνος βασιλεύσειν ἀντὶ ἐκείνου.

Astyages, son of Cyaxares, now inherited the throne. A daughter was born to him, whom he called Mandane; and Astyages dreamed that she urinated so much that the urine filled his city, then went on to flood all of Asia. He consulted the dream-experts among the magi, and was alarmed by the details which he heard from them. Later, when this Mandane was already old enough for marriage, he did not give her as wife to any of the Medes who were worthy of him, because he was fearful of the dream; instead he gave her to a Persian named Cambyses, who, he discovered, belonged to a good house and was mild in nature, but was still—he thought—far inferior to a Mede of even middling status.

In the first year of Mandane's marriage to Cambyses Astyages had another dream: he dreamed that a vine grew from the genitalia of this daughter, and spread over the whole of Asia. He again consulted the dream-experts on what he had seen, then sent for his daughter to come to him from the land of the Persians. By now she was pregnant. When she arrived he kept her under guard, planning to kill the product of her womb: for the dream-experts among the magi interpreted his dream as indicating that his daughter's offspring would take his place upon the throne.

In this paper I shall discuss the narrative logic of this passage, and its role within Herodotus' presentation of Cyrus' story. In passing, but only in passing, I shall graze a number of other issues: the origin (Greek or Oriental?) of these items; one point of historical truth (was the historical Cyrus Mandane's son, or an outsider?); and the ways we might reconstruct the symbolic suggestions of urination for Herodotus' audience.

I

First, the narrative logic. Here critics have generally been hard on Herodotus. The two dreams, it is claimed, represent a simple doublet.¹ The resulting narrative has also seemed to some to be inconsequential or inept: in Herodotus' account Astyages has no male heir (*ἄπαις ἔρσενος γόνου*, 1.109.3), so the notion of his daughter's offspring ruling all Asia or coming to the throne need not be threatening; and even if some threat were to be felt, what could be more senseless than to give Mandane in any sort

¹ W. Aly, *Volksmärchen, Sage und Novelle bei Herodot und seine Zeitgenossen* (Göttingen, 1921), p. 49, elaborated by H. Erbse, *Studien zum Verständnis Herodots* (Berlin and New York, 1992), pp. 34–5; cf. Asheri on 1.107, 'I due sogni... sono analoghi e trasmettano il medesimo messaggio'. Contra, K. Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike* (Göttingen, 1940), p. 149, arguing that both dreams are necessary to suggest the duality of Cyrus, both boon and curse. If the argument pursued below is correct, that duality is already suggested by the urination dream.

of marriage, least of all one to a foreigner?² Von Fritz inferred that the original version of the dream(s) suggested a threat from *outside* the regal house:³ that, he thought, was the only plausible explanation of Astyages' alarm. For what it was worth, such was the version of Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 9.2, who represented the infant Cyrus as no relation of Astyages: this Ctesian version may well underlie Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 66.9, who makes Cyrus the son of a Mardian 'Argoste' rather than of Mandane.⁴

Yet there is one crucial difference between the first dream (urination) and the second (vine): the suggestions⁵ of the second are much more *clear-cut* than the first.⁶ The spreading tree in the second dream evidently portends a coming domination, here as in Sophocles' *Electra* (419–23) or in Xerxes' dream at 7.19.1:⁷ this is especially appropriate in an Oriental dream, both because of the familiarity with such symbolism as portending success and salvation⁸ and because of the frequency of the vine as an Achaemenid royal symbol.⁹

² Cf. esp. K. von Fritz, *Die griechische Geschichtsschreibung* (Berlin, 1967), p. 286; D. Fehling, *Herodotus and his sources* (revised edition; tr. J. G. Howie [Liverpool, 1989]), p. 200 (who does make one crucial point clear: below, n. 28); J. A. S. Evans, *Herodotus, explorer of the past* (Princeton, 1991), p. 53; Erbse (n. 1), pp. 34–5. ³ Von Fritz (n. 2), pp. 286–7.

⁴ But it is difficult to go much further in reconstructing Ctesias' account from Nicolaus. For instance, the graphic embellishment and the rationalization of supernatural details are both recurrent features of Nicolaus' narrative, and may well reflect his own technique. See M. Toher, *CA* 8 (1989), 159–72.

⁵ By 'suggestions' I here mean the suggestions sensed by an ancient audience, culturally primed to interpret dreams as potentially (though not universally: see S. R. West, *CQ* 37 [1987], 264) predictive of the future. I am not here concerned with those felt by post-Freudian modern readers, primed as we are to interpret dreams as illuminating the *present* psyche of the dreamer. On this distinction cf. S. R. F. Price, in *Before Sexuality*, D. M. Halperin, J. J. Winkler and F. I. Zeitlin (edd.), (Princeton, 1990), pp. 365–88: Freud emphasized the point himself, e.g. *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900: J. Strachey [tr., ed.], [Harmondsworth, 1976]), pp. 59–61, 170; 'Five lectures on psycho-analysis', in *Two short accounts of Psycho-analysis* (Harmondsworth, 1962: first published 1910), p. 61. I therefore resist the temptation to toy with psychoanalytic interpretations. Here a father's preoccupation with his daughter's genitalia would evidently be a promising theme, but such modern decodings are likely to obscure the original audience response.—It is true that even in the Greek world dreams could be used to illustrate the dreamer's current state of health: cf. especially [Hipp.] *περί διαίτης* 4; G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, reason, and experience* (Cambridge, 1979), p. 43; S. M. Oberhelman, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 61 (1987), 47–60, and *ANRW* ii.37.1 (1993), 121–56, esp. 127–36. But the interpretative register is on the whole substantially different (cf. also V. Langholf, *Medical theories in Hippocrates* [Berlin and New York, 1990], p. 246), and clearly unhelpful here: for instance a dream of a spring or cistern might point to a bladder disease, or a flood-dream might indicate an excess of bodily moisture (*περί διαίτης* 4.90 p. 656 L. = pp. 438–40 J.). Herodotus' Astyages has his problems, but the audience will not conceive them as being of this sort.

⁶ Contrast R. Bichler, *Chiron* 15 (1985), 130, emphasizing the 'eindeutig' quality of both dreams. Even H. R. Immerwahr, *Form and thought in Herodotus* (APA Monographs 23, Cleveland, OH, 1966), p. 163, who is sensitive to the darker aspects of the urination dream, does not bring out its multivalence; nor does G. Devereux, *Dreams in Greek Tragedy: an Ethno-Psycho-Analytical Study* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1976), pp. 219–55, whose analysis is at once highly elaborate and highly reductionist.

⁷ Dr Heyworth also points to Ov. *Fast.* 3.27–38, where the pregnant Silvia dreams of two palm-trees (Romulus and Remus), and her uncle Amulius' frustrated attempt to fell the greater of the two.

⁸ Cf. the Old Testament parallels, emphasized by Devereux (n. 6), 229, and Bichler (n. 6), pp. 130–31: *Genesis* 40.9–13, *Ezekiel* 17, and the later *Daniel* 4. For detailed discussion of the first and last cases cf. E. L. Ehrlich, *Der Traum im Alten Testament* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 73, Berlin, 1953), pp. 65–73, 113–22.

⁹ Cf. Asheri on 1.107; P. Frisch, *Die Träume bei Herodot* (Meisenheim, 1968), p. 10.

The urination dream would be much harder to interpret. Here it will be useful to adduce evidence from other cultures, though it is important to be clear about the methodology. Of course we cannot assume that Herodotus' Greek audience would align with every nuance felt by a Hottentot or a Namaqua tribesman, but comparative material can still serve as a suggestive eye-opener; it can alert us to alternative possibilities, and in particular warn us against too hasty an inference from limited and western modern assumptions.¹⁰ Naturally, the comparative material becomes more telling as it comes closer to the world with which Herodotus is dealing, and the most illuminating material will in fact be Assyrian; but even more distant parallels can be thought-provoking.

Both Greek and comparative material make it clear that urine, as a warm carrier of bodily life-juices, can suggest many things.¹¹ It can have positive associations with healing and fertility,¹² especially when, as here, a virgin's urine is concerned; but urine can also have a magical, apotropaic function, and this can in its turn lead into a gesture of symbolic magic, casting ill fortune on an enemy or simply articulating contempt.¹³ This relates to a feature of pollution which several scholars have recently stressed, the way in which dirty, 'polluting' elements can in suitable circumstances cleanse as well as defile, can bring cures and benefits as well as disease and disaster.¹⁴ It is understandable that a whole art of folk-urinomancy could develop, requiring an expert to read the signs and suggestions of a person's urine.

It is understandable too that a urination dream would be particularly hard to interpret. Closely similar dreams could bear totally divergent interpretations, ranging from the wholly propitious to the totally catastrophic. The range of symbolic suggestions is best illustrated by an Assyrian dream-book, containing material which

¹⁰ This methodology provides a further reason (cf. n. 5) why I have passed over psychoanalytic explanations. The culturally specific features of such explanations are increasingly recognized: true, *any* decoding or symbolism will have such specific features, but it is precisely our modern assumptions which we should try to minimize or renounce—even if (of course) total escape is impossible.

¹¹ Cf. the fascinating collection of material in R. Muth, *Träger der Lebenskraft: Ausscheidungen des Organismus im Volksglauben der Antike* (Wien, 1956), and his briefer summary in *R-E Spb.* xi (1968) s.v. 'Urin', pp. 1292–303.

¹² Thus it was a Hottentot and Namaqua custom for a priest to urinate over a couple after marrying them, and a tradition in the Papuan Gulf for a chieftain to urinate into the mouth of a newly initiated warrior (Muth [n. 11], 21, and S. Donaldson in *Encyclopaedia of Homosexuality* (W. R. Dynes [ed.], 1990), pp. 1353–5). The well-known (and in part scientifically confirmed: Muth [n. 11], p. 19, etc) value of urine as a folk-remedy is reflected in the tale of the Pharaoh Pheros at 2.111.2–3: cf. A. B. Lloyd ad loc., F. D. Harvey in Dawson and Harvey, *BICS* 83 (1966), 94 n. 34, and H. von Staden, *Helios* 19 (1992), 7–30.

¹³ Muth (n. 11), esp. pp. 18–22, 64–70, 129–43, 154–60. For the contemptuous suggestions of urination cf. the dreams discussed by Artemidorus 4.44. D. Fehling, *Ethologische Überlegungen auf dem Gebiet der Altertumskunde* (Zetemata 61, Munich, 1974), p. 34 collects further evidence.

¹⁴ Cf. especially J.-P. Vernant, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece* (Janet Lloyd [tr.], Brighton and New Jersey, 1980), pp. 125–6; R. C. T. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983), 233–4. Von Staden (n. 12) brings out that this nexus of ideas is particularly strong when women, often constructed as 'dirty', are in point: thus faeces are prescribed in the Hippocratic corpus as a treatment for female diseases. The femininity both of Mandane and of 'Asia' may therefore be relevant; but the suggestions of urine admittedly seem less gender-specific than those of faeces (von Staden [n. 12], 11–12).

may well go back to the second millennium B.C.¹⁵ In each case, the reference seems to be to a dreamed, rather than actual, act of urination:

If his urine [expands(?)] in front of (his) penis and [] the wall: [he will not have] sons.

If his urine ex[pands] in front of (his) penis and [] the wall, the street: he will h[ave] sons.

If his urine expands in front of his penis and [fills(?)] all the streets: his property will be robb[ed] and given to the city [].

If his urine expands in front of (his) penis [and] he does obeisance in front of his urine: he will beget a son and he (i.e. the son) will be king....

If he sprinkles (himself) with his urine: his (sheep)-fold will expand.

If he sprinkles (himself) with his urine and wipes himself (clean): (the disease called) 'Hand of Ishtar'.

If he directs urine towards the sky, the son of this man whom he will (thereafter) beget will become important, (but) his (own) days will be short.

If he pours his (urine) into a river: his harvest will be bountiful.

If he pours his urine into a well: he will lose his property.

If he pours his urine into an irrigation-canal: Adad will flood his harvest.

If he pou[rs] his urine to his (personal) god [or to] his (personal) goddess: he will [find(?)] his lost property.

In Herodotus too there was more than one way of taking the dream. The urine *might* straightforwardly suggest Mandane's future offspring, as modern critics tend uncritically to assume: it is true that the urinary and genital aspects of the uro-genital tract are often assimilated to one another in myths and folklore, just as they are with those 'sons' of the Assyrian dream-book.¹⁶ In that case Astyages' dream would simply presage a successful, conquering grandson, and an heirless grandfather might indeed have little to fear. Yet the urinary/genital assimilation is comparatively rare in Greek thought;¹⁷ the darker, more negative suggestions of urine could also suggest to Herodotus' audience a soiled bodily product rather than an honourably produced son, hinting at a *distorted* succession.¹⁸ It may be significant that one of the few Greek cases of urinary/genital assimilation uses the word *οὔρειν* ('urinate') in a story of Minos. His wife Pasiphae, infuriated by his sexual unfaithfulness, laid a curse upon

¹⁵ A. L. Oppenheim, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (Trans. Am. Philosoph. Society 46.3, Philadelphia, 1956): the quotation is from p. 265. Cf. J. Bottéro, *Ktêma* 7 (1982), 11–16; Asheri on 1.107. For more recent parallels cf. J. S. Lincoln, *The Dream in Primitive Cultures* (London, 1935), pp. 107–8: among the Ashanti a dream of falling into a latrine, or in China a dream of a lavatory, could be taken as a sign of good luck, 'you will get money'; but in many cultures similar dreams also signify both death or loss. If one searches for a rationalized explanation, Stephanie West points out to me that latrines have proved a fruitful source for medieval archaeologists: a user was unlikely to search for anything valuable dropped while in action. So where there is muck, there may genuinely also be brass.

¹⁶ Or in the tale of the generous old woman who, on her death, transformed into a Brahman's urine as a way of giving birth to a hundred posthumous children: E. Chavannes, *Cinq cent contes et apologues: extraits du Tripitaka Chinois* (Paris, 1910–34) i.80–81: cf. Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of Folk Literature* (Copenhagen, 1955–8) T.512.2. In that case the urine was drunk by a doe, and the doe became pregnant: for two similar tales cf. Chavannes ii.283 and iii.233–4, in each of which a doe drinks a hermit's urine and becomes pregnant. The doe then typically begins the nurture of the human baby, who turns out to have miraculous qualities. There is a possibility, but no more, that a similar story-pattern underlies the Herodotean case, with human urine linked to the birth and animal-nurturing of a wonder-child. If so, that would imply a version in which the miraculous urination was real (though doubtless less spectacular), not merely dreamed.

¹⁷ As Bichler (n. 6), 132 n. 30 remarks. Besides the Minos story to be discussed in a moment, Muth (n. 11), 154–60 and *R-E Spb.* xi 1300–303 mentions only the Boeotian myth of the parentage of Orion, where in one version three gods urinate into an animal hide: as Muth emphasizes, etymological speculation (*Οὐρίων* or *Οὐρείων* ~ *οὔρειν*) has here evidently played a part.

¹⁸ Cf. Immerwahr (n. 6), 163, concentrating on urine as a pollutant. Herodotus was aware that the Persians thought of urine as unclean: cf. 1.133.3, 1.138.2 with the commentaries.

him, and the result was that after intercourse with other women Minos would *οὐρεῖν* 'snakes and scorpions and venomous millipedes' (Ant. Lib. 41.4–5).¹⁹ The sexual function is again distorted, this time in a particularly uncomfortable way: *οὐρεῖν* would not be a natural way of imaging any normal part of the reproductive process.

The *flood* of urine might again be difficult to interpret. Once again, it could be straightforward, along the same lines as the spreading vine: an offspring²⁰ will overwhelm and dominate all Asia. This has something in common with the familiar²¹ phenomenon of territorial urination: the urine marks out the family property. Still, folklore urine-floods rarely have these sorts of connotation, and this may alert us to wider possibilities. Particularly associated with female urination, such floods sometimes denote barriers and hindrances, though admittedly the (male) hero rarely finds them insuperable. There is an African story, for instance, of a traveller, Kombe Alhassu, finding his way into a giant's house, fleeing in terror and hiding in what he thinks is a cave—but in fact it is the vagina of the giantess, and he is soon evacuated to safety in a flood of urine.²² More often, floods simply explain the origins of rivers or seas; as in the Melanesian tale of the old woman who always urinated in a giant leaf in her garden; one day two boys accidentally upturned it in their play—they were shooting at lizards—and that was the origin of the sea.²³ In Astyages' dream too there might be similar suggestions. The king's city (presumably Ecbatana) and then the land of Asia are turned into sea: that may hint at the theme of distorting nature which becomes so important in the later books.²⁴ And the darker suggestions of urination may again be relevant, indicating contempt or hostility for the city and land, and perhaps by extension for its current king.²⁵ This is not the sort of imagery that gently points to a peaceful inheritance.

¹⁹ Simon Swain reminds me of the Athenian 'Ephebus', who in one spectacular orgasm produced a 'furry creature walking quickly with its many legs' (Plut. *Mor.* 733c). Plutarch tells this immediately after a similar urination tale, though that need not in itself mean an assimilation of orgasm to urination.

²⁰ Cf. the material collected by A. Dundes, *Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology* 9 (1986), 359–72 (reprinted in his collection *The Flood Myth* [Berkeley and London, 1988], pp. 151–65). Dundes argues that flood myths of the Noah-Deucalion type represent, via urinary/genital assimilation, a myth of male procreation without female assistance, with male urination mimicking the female breaking of the waters in childbirth. This emphasis would seem to ignore the greater frequency of *female* urination in such myths (below, nn. 22–3), as here.

²¹ Most familiar to us from the embarrassing behaviour of domestic cats and dogs, but the phenomenon seems to have wider anthropological parallels and significance: cf. Muth (n. 11), p. 24; Donaldson (n. 12), p. 1354. The use of ithyphallic Herms to demarcate territory may be a related phenomenon (W. Burkert, *Structure and history in Greek mythology and ritual* [Berkeley etc, 1979], pp. 39–41, 45).

²² L. Frobenius, *Atlantis* (Jena, 1921–8), vi.219: cf. some other instances among those listed by Stith Thompson (n. 16), A.933. Notice the confusion of vagina and urethra, on which see Devereux (n. 6), p. 228, and for classical Greece especially Lesley Ann Dean-Jones, *Women's bodies in Classical Greek Science* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 80–83, observing that Aristotle made the same mistake (*PA* 689a6–9). This confusion might aid the urinary/genital assimilation discussed above.

²³ R. H. Codrington, *The Melanesians: Studies in their Anthropology and Folk-lore* (Oxford, 1891), pp. 372–3; cf. P. Sébillot, *Le folk-lore de la France* (Paris, 1905), ii.327–8 for parallels in French folk-lore; Géza Róheim, *The Gates of the Dream* (New York, 1952), pp. 448–9 (= *The Flood Myth* [n. 20], pp. 152–3) for parallels from the New Hebrides, the Narrinyeri, and the Heiltsuk; and more generally Stith Thompson (n. 16) A.923.1, 933.2, 1012.2.

²⁴ I have discussed this 'land and sea' theme in *Georgica: Greek studies in honour of George Cawkwell* (M. A. Flower and M. Toher [eds.], *BICS Supplement* 58, 1991), pp. 136–9. Immerwahr (n. 6), p. 163 was not far astray in connecting this with the 'river-motif' which his book emphasized.

²⁵ G. Hoffmann, *La jeune fille, le pouvoir et la mort* (Paris, 1992), pp. 205–6.

The elusiveness of this first dream is important for making sense of Herodotus' narrative. It is understandable that Astyages should here refer such a dream to the experts, and that he should find their responses alarming: but, in view of the bemusing multivalence of the dream, it is also understandable that he would be reluctant to kill his daughter out of hand, or even—yet—to exclude the possibility of her having offspring, for 'offspring' was only one of the possible registers for interpreting the dream. Instead he distances her from the 'city' which was first threatened by the urine-flood, and gives her to an outsider to marry, the Persian Cambyses; a reader might presume that, even if 'offspring' turned out to be the correct interpretative register, any child's lack of status might still exclude the possibility of serious danger.²⁶ There is a certain parental halfheartedness about this, but a reader need not find it humanly implausible.

The enigmatic quality of the first dream also clarifies its narrative relationship to the second. Duplication of dreams in such a setting is anyway not implausible: the Old Testament and *Gilgamesh* both offer parallels to such double dreaming when so momentous an event is presaged.²⁷ But the second dream is not a mere repeat, for once again the increasing clarity is important. This time the suggestions are inescapable: Mandane's offspring will rule all Asia. Had this dream come first, an heirless Astyages might indeed have had nothing to fear, and could rejoice in the presaged glory of a grandson; the marriage to an outsider would in that case have been most inappropriate. But by now it is too late, for Mandane is already married to that outsider. It is that marriage, more than anything in the dream itself, that makes the prophecy such a disturbing one:²⁸ now any succession of Mandane's offspring to the throne could only, once again, be a distorted one. Hence the experts interpret this, not as suggesting that his grandson will inherit, but that he will 'rule *instead of him*' (1.108.2), a suggestion of violence and usurpation rather than natural inheritance. The time for half-measures has now passed, and Astyages turns to more murderous action.

II

Herodotus' narrative has turned out to be coherent after all. The two dreams do not simply repeat one another, and their order could not be reversed. The halfhearted response to the first is a natural reaction to its multivalence; then that first response, involving the marriage to the outsider, is a necessary premiss for the second, clearer dream to be taken as threatening.

We might still ask about Herodotus' own part in this. Is the coherence his own imposition, as he deftly finds room for two uncomfortably similar items? Can we

²⁶ Erbse (n. 1), 34 compares the marriage of Euripides' Electra to a peasant farmer, where Aegisthus and Clytemnestra could similarly hope that any offspring would be politically negligible. That comparison is more apt for Herodotus' presentation, with Cambyses as a middle-class quietist, than for any version which acknowledged Cambyses' royal status: cf. below. Devereux (n. 6), 223 suggests that Euripides is here borrowing from Herodotus.

²⁷ Oppenheim (n. 15), 208–9; Immerwahr (n. 6), 163 n. 39. Such serial dreaming is of course familiar in real life, and has attracted psychoanalytic attention: cf. Devereux (n. 6), p. 225, with further bibliography.

²⁸ Fehling (n. 2), p. 200 makes this important point clearly. (Justin 1.4.2–4 thus abbreviates incomprehensibly when he suppresses the first dream and represents the second as the inspiration for the marriage to Cambyses.) But John Moles may be right in putting to me that this second dream is also phallic, and intrudes some suggestive and disquieting blurring of male and female roles. The vagina produces the equivalent of a male member; its product is described by words (*γεννώμενον, γόνος*) more usually used of the male. If so, the challenging male-female play is another 'tragic' element to add to those discussed below.

detect anything about his adaptation of his original material? Or about the way in which he has made it serve the wider themes of his narrative?

These are not straightforward questions to address, and they touch on some of the most disputed questions of current Herodotean criticism; but some points can be made. Even if there are 'Greek' touches elsewhere in his Cyrus narrative,²⁹ there seems no reason to doubt that he is using genuinely Oriental material here: whatever might be thought of the rest of the comparative evidence, the Assyrian material confirms both the importance and the ambivalence of urination in Near Eastern dream-interpretation. Even the combination of the two dream-motifs *may* go back beyond Herodotus; the vine imagery would have been as clear-cut as the urination was ambivalent, for an Assyrian, a Median, or a Persian just as for a Greek; and either an Oriental or a Greek could have developed a story of a royal father finding such a dream about his daughter to be deeply disturbing, but not yet sufficiently disturbing to provoke murder or infanticide. And there certainly seems insufficient reason to follow von Fritz in inferring an original version with Cyrus as an outsider rather than a prince.³⁰ In terms of the story's imagery, we have seen that Astyages' growing alarm makes good sense in its own terms; and in terms of real history, it is perfectly plausible to think of Cyrus as the king's grandson.³¹ Cambyzes was a royal figure, the king of Anšan (though Herodotus obscures the fact—more on this below): he would be a thoroughly suitable husband for a Median princess.³²

We are on surer ground in detecting some Herodotean touches in the detail of the narrative, in particular the way in which he makes the sequence more credible still. First, we are not told exactly what the experts advised after the first dream, only that Astyages 'was alarmed by the details which he heard from them': there is not yet any talk of the fear of Mandane's potential offspring. Had any such reading of the dream

²⁹ Cf. especially Fehling (n. 2), pp. 110–11, 198–9. The most notable Greek elements are the κύων ~ Κύρος word-play at 1.122.3 and the 'Thyestes banquet' of 1.119–20: cf. Aly (n. 1), 50; W. Burkert, *Homo Necans* (P. Bing [tr.], Berkeley etc, 1983), pp. 108–9; Erbse (n. 1), p. 33. However, it is bad method to infer a Greek origin for the whole of the Cyrus narrative. It is almost inconceivable that Persian stories about Cyrus were *not* circulating (cf. D. L. Gera, *Xenophon's Cyropaedia: style, genre, and literary technique* [Oxford, 1993], pp. 16–17), and it is likely both (a) that Greek elements had already combined with Persian before Herodotus, and (b) that Herodotus' own filtering of any 'Persian' material continued the process of contamination, in particular streamlining to highlight elements which would be most familiar to a Greek audience. The *Märchenmotiven* of the exposure and salvation of a wonder-child have an international and cross-cultural background (cf. von Fritz [n. 2], 284–5), and it is rash to claim them either as Greek or as Oriental. Brian Lewis, *The Sargon Legend* (American Schools of Oriental Research Dissertation Series 4, Cambridge, MA, 1980), pp. 262, 265 tentatively identifies a Mesopotamian or Western Asian origin for the wonder-child folktale; but (a) it is uncertain whether the quest for an Ur-form is methodologically sound, and perhaps we should think of polygenesis; and (b) even if Lewis is right, the folktale motifs will have spread from their place of origin at least a millennium before Cyrus.

³⁰ Cf. above, pp. 68–9.

³¹ That version is rejected, without argument, by e.g. W. Hinz, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* vi.5 (1985) s.v. 'Kyros', 401, apparently followed by Bichler (n. 6), 134. It is accepted, equally without argument, by e.g. I. M. Diakonoff and M. Mallowan in *Cambridge History of Iran* ii (I. Gershevitch [ed.], 1985), 144 and 404. The most judicious comments are those of Rawlinson *ad loc.*

³² Such a marriage would admittedly be less plausible if the historical Astyages genuinely had no male heir, as Herodotus claims, and if Mandane was the only daughter and hence, presumptively, wife or mother of the heir. But, immediately we accept the possibility that the story's details have been manipulated by Herodotus and/or his source, then it is just as likely that some other offspring of Astyages have slipped out of the tale. They would only complicate the story. Cf. Erbse (n. 1), p. 34.

been made more explicit (even as one of several interpretative possibilities), the risks Astyages was running by marrying her to anyone would have been more uncomfortably clear. Secondly, Cambyses is represented, not as the king that he was, but merely as 'belonging to a good house and mild in nature, but still—Astyages thought—far inferior to a Mede of even middling status'. This serves to make Astyages' half-measure a more plausible one, for a marriage to any sort of outside royalty would accentuate the continuing riskiness of the course.

We should also notice the ways in which this episode reflects characteristic concerns of Herodotus' narrative: even if the basic material was offered him by his sources, he has certainly made it his own. Take the recurring dream, for instance. The most telling parallel is within the History itself, the dream which visits Xerxes twice (7.12.2, 14.1) and then comes to Artabanus as well (7.17.1); then the further dream of Xerxes at 7.19.1.³³ There, as here, the point is not merely to emphasize the dreams' portentousness, but also to bring out the inexorability of the event portended. Xerxes, like Astyages, has already begun to try to avoid the unhappy events which the first dream threatened, but the returning dream underlines the hopelessness of any such attempt.

It is also a characteristic pattern of Herodotus' dream-stories to see a dreamer's responses turn out counter-productive, so that they bring on precisely the terrors which the dream portended.³⁴ Here too all Astyages' actions turn out to be precisely those necessary to make the dream come true.³⁵ And this is particularly telling at this point of the narrative: for it takes us back to Croesus, particularly the story of Atys and Adrastus (1.34–45). Croesus too has a dream, this time portending his son's death (1.34.1); Croesus too, there as elsewhere in his story, is intrigued and concerned by revelations of wisdom, but—whether they come from Solon, or in his dreams, or from Delphi—he finds them bewildering and unfathomable; Croesus too takes what seem to him sensible precautions, but his over-protectiveness turns out to be precisely the factor that destroys his son, with the chosen protector Adrastus throwing the fatal missile. There as here, an initial extreme caution goes on to give way to over-confidence, as each king is persuaded that his actions are sufficient to guard against the danger: Atys persuades his father that he cannot die of a spear-wound on a boar hunt (1.39), the seers assure Astyages that the threat from the young Cyrus has passed (1.120.5–6). Admittedly, Croesus is concerned to preserve his heir, while Astyages decides to destroy his, but the distinction is less crucial than it seems: for it is precisely Astyages' halfheartedness, his reluctance to take the hardest measures against his daughter, which directs his actions. The classic exposure-and-escape-of-the-wonder-child folktale presents a murderous, pitiless head of house, who finds the killing of a defenceless child or grandchild a sensible way of protecting his throne.³⁶ Astyages transforms the stereotype: he does what he can to be merciful, and it takes the clarity of the second dream to force him to decisive action.

This is not the last time that we shall see this trait in Astyages, for the same halfheartedness leads him to spare the adolescent Cyrus after his rediscovery, and to

³³ For discussion cf. Pelling (n. 24), pp. 130–31 and 139–40, with bibliography: add G. E. M. de Ste Croix, *G&R* 24 (1977), 143–5.

³⁴ This emerges clearly from Frisch (n. 9), though much of his treatment is superficial (cf. W. Marg's review, *Gnomon* 42 [1970], 515–17). The phenomenon of the 'self-fulfilling oracle' is evidently related.

³⁵ Including, a little later, the involvement of Harpagus. That is hard to explain realistically: why could not Astyages directly order a minion to carry out the execution, rather than involve the vizier (cf. Erbse [n. 1], 32–3)?

³⁶ Cf. the material collected by Brian Lewis (n. 29), summarized at his pp. 211–12.

rejoice (ἐχάρη, 1.121.1, in Herodotus an ominous word)³⁷ when the seers recommend this gentle course; but they also advise the king to send him away, hinting at some continuing unease. Thus Cyrus too is sent, like his mother Mandane before him, to the Persians (1.120.6–121.1), and the consequences are momentous. In each case the halfheartedness turns out worse for Astyages than any fullblooded response would have done: and this is not merely humanly credible, it is also tragic.

Tragedy too presents figures whose good intentions turn out deathly: one thinks of Deianeira. Tragedy deals with a divided οἶκος, and so does this: even Harpagus is presented as a blood-relative to the royal house (1.108.3, 109.3), and consequently Harpagus' part in the planned murder of the infant Cyrus and Astyages' murder of Harpagus' son both appear as internal familial crimes. The second in particular, with its 'Thyestes banquet', is particularly tragic in resonance.³⁸ The marriage of Mandane to Cambyses bears a further significance here. The definition of Cambyses as a social inferior is useful to the narrative logic, as we have seen; but the social mismatch of Cyrus' parents also preserves a further Herodotean pattern. The Lydian λόγος began with a similar mixed marriage, with Gyges marrying a royal woman who was by far his social superior: there too the resulting dynasty ran a self-destructive course, and the instrument of destruction was precisely this 'mule' Cyrus, 'born of mixed parentage, with a mother of better class and a father of worse' (1.91.5–6).³⁹ Such episodes also fit a further mythical schema, whereby a threatening or disastrous child often occupies an ambivalent position, at once central and marginal, at once inside and outside the royal house.⁴⁰ That too is familiar from tragedy: one only has to think, in their different ways, of Oedipus, Orestes, Polynices, and Hippolytus.

We have come some way from the simple smoothing of a few sentences of narrative, but we have also seen that unobtrusive deftness of technique is more than an end in itself. In a few strokes, Herodotus has presented a plausible picture of a concerned father, one who gropes for enigmatic truth, one who balances cautious self-protection with a reluctance to authorize bloody kin-killing; and the narrative has set his hopeless efforts against a background of cosmic inevitability. Herodotus has fitted this portrayal into a wider picture of a family at odds with itself, where affection and menace, boon and disaster, caution and over-confidence mingle with bewildering and devastating effect. There are many ways, indeed, in which Cyrus' story replays that of Croesus, in a subtly different register. The curse on the Lydian house was explicit: Croesus' punishment in the fifth generation is traced back to Gyges (1.13.2, 91.1). But it is possible to see the origins of Cyrus, the 'mule' who destroys Croesus, as

³⁷ Cf. the 'great pleasure' which Harpagus has just twice felt, in each case tragically deluded (1.119.1, 6). Elsewhere cf. Croesus at 1.54.1, 1.56.1; later e.g. Cambyses at 3.34.5, Polycrates at 3.42.2, 123.1; Xerxes at 7.37.3, 44, 9.49.1, 109.1: H. Bischoff, *Der Warner bei Herodot* (Diss. Marburg, 1932), p. 36 n. 1; C. C. Chiasson, *GRBS* 27 (1986), 249–62; S. P. Flory *AJP* 99 (1978), 145–53, esp. 150; D. Lateiner, *TAPA* 107 (1977), 173–82.

³⁸ As has often been observed: cf. especially H. Schwabl, *Gymn.* 76 (1969) 269 and n. 15; Fehling (n. 2), 110–11.

³⁹ As the ring of Croesus' story closes, that initial presumption of Gyges—his 'going astray', ἀμαρτάνει—is recalled a few sentences before this mention of the 'mule' Cyrus and the similar 'going astray' (ἀμαρτάνει again) which he inspired in Croesus (1.91.1 ~ 5–7). Both form part of Apollo's explication of the riddling divine will: the symmetrical beginning and end of the Lydian dynasty are simultaneously made clear.

⁴⁰ Cf. the case of Cypselus, as elucidated by C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Opuscula Atheniensia* 17.11 (1988), p. 181 and n. 122 (= *Reading Greek culture* [Oxford, 1991], p. 266 and 282–3 n. 122). Stephanie West also reminds me of the versions that Apries' daughter was Cambyses' mother (3.2.1) and that Nectanebos was the real father of Alexander. An interesting variation, she observes, is Stalin as an illegitimate son of a Georgian prince (R. Conquest, *The Great Terror* [revised edn., 1990], p. 55): has the Georgian royal line here taken the place of the Romanovs?

intimating a subtler equivalent of the same theme. The two tales are even mutually related, in terms which themselves highlight questions of family: as Croesus' story neared its end, the family relationship of Astyages, Cyrus, and Croesus became relevant (1.73–4), with an earlier Thyestes-banquet playing its part (1.73.5–6). The Achaemenid monarchy, like the Lydian monarchy before it, begins with an unequal union and a familial crime: and Cyrus' successors will find themselves no less trapped by history and no less self-destructive than Croesus had been, though the registers of historical explanation will become even richer and more varied, and any 'curse on the royal house' will be even less cosmically straightforward. Much of the challenge to Herodotus' readers is the exploration of such recurrent patterns, and the attempt to disentangle what is constant and what is new; and our few sentences of narrative play their part, as readers sense the beginning of a new dynastic tragedy, one which will require the entire History to carry to its end.⁴¹

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Proverbial Wisdom in Herodotus

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I. Introduction

Herodotus' frequent use of proverbs and other wisdom expressions helps to make his *Histories* more colorful and gives us insight into the folk wisdom of the past. But do the proverbs in the *Histories* simply provide enjoyment and exemplify traditional modes of thought, or do they serve a more serious function as well? In this paper I will argue that Herodotus uses proverbial expressions, particularly contradictory *gnomai*, as part of the presentation of his historical analysis, to help explain the reasons why events turned out the way they did.

Greek writers of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E. used a variety of terms for wisdom expressions. Some, such as λόγος or ἔπος,¹ have such a wide semantic range that it is clear they were not used as technical terms. Of those terms referring specifically to wisdom expressions (such as παροιμία, ὑποθήκη, ἀπόφθεγμα, and γνώμη), γνώμη seems to have been the most inclusive.² Although the Greek gnome is not exactly the same as the modern proverb, the two genres share key characteristics in form, content and usage. According to Aristotle, a gnome is a general statement concerning the objects of practical wisdom (i.e., what should be chosen and what should be avoided with regard to human action).³ The form of a gnome is relatively stable, but not rigidly fixed.⁴ Like the modern proverb, the gnome was based on traditional

¹E.g., Hdt. 7.51.3: ἐς θυμὸν ὧν βαλεῖ καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν ἔπος....

²Lardinois 214.

³See Aristotle's definition of the γνώμη at *Rh.* 1394a21–25, and compare his definition of practical wisdom at *EN* 1140b20–21. For detailed discussions of Aristotle's definition of the γνώμη, see Horna and von Fritz 74–75, Kindstrand 74, and Lardinois 214–15.

⁴For example, the Aeschylean gnomic phrase πάθει μάθος (*A.* 177) appears in Herodotus as τὰ δέ μοι παθήματα ἐόντα ἀχάρिता μαθήματα γέγονε (1.207.1). For further discussion of this issue see Lardinois 215–17.

wisdom.⁵ Also like the proverb, the gnome was frequently used to influence behavior or to argue for a particular point of view.⁶ Thus, while we tend to categorize most wisdom expressions as proverbs, it seems correct to conclude that “Herodotus’ audience would have recognized his generalizations as *gnomai*.”⁷

The most comprehensive discussions of wisdom expressions in Herodotus are those of Lang and Gould.⁸ Lang identifies seventy-four *gnomai* in the *Histories* and discusses about fifty of these in some detail.⁹ Concentrating mainly on the wisdom expressions in the speeches, she groups them according to subject matter and compares them to similar expressions in Homer and the tragedians. Lang’s conclusion that “whether the maxim is used to support a warning, to explain a point being made, or to urge a course of action, it applies a generally accepted truth to the particular situation and so puts it in a context that lends conviction,” is an important contribution to understanding Herodotus’ use of wisdom expressions.¹⁰ Lang’s treatment is weakened, however, by the assumption that Herodotus’ use of these wisdom expressions simply reflects “the continued operation and influence of traditional folk wisdom.”¹¹ Lang does note that the maxim “look to the end” is “basic to Herodotus’...historical interpretation,” but the possibility that Herodotus may be systematically manipulating his speakers’ use of such expressions is not fully explored.

Gould seems to share Lang’s view that, in his use of *gnomai*, Herodotus naively reflects contemporary folk traditions. Gould argues that Herodotus is

⁵Horna and von Fritz 74–75, Spoerri 823, cf. Silk. Some of the *gnomai* cited by Aristotle include: οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις πάντ’ ἀνὴρ εὐδαιμονεῖ (1394b2) and ἀθάνατον ὀργὴν μὴ φύλασσε θνητὸς ὢν (1394b23).

⁶Horna and von Fritz 75. On the modern proverb see below.

⁷Gould 1989: 81. The Greek term *παροιμία* seems to have referred to a wisdom expression that was particularly distinguished by antiquity, brevity and wit, but was otherwise very close to the *γνώμη*, cf. Russo 122 and Edwards *et al.* 1115. For the lack of a clear distinction between *γνώμη* and *παροιμία*, see Kindstrand 74–75 and Huxley 332. Although *παροιμία* is frequently translated as “proverb,” while *γνώμη* is often translated as “maxim,” the *γνώμη* does seem to be the closest parallel to the modern proverb. See, however, Hölscher 238.

⁸Lang 58–67 and Gould 1989: 63–85; see also Russo’s treatment of the *gnomai* in the Candaules/Gyges story, 126–29. For the history of scholarship on wisdom expressions in Greek and Roman authors in general, see Horna and von Fritz, Spoerri, Taylor 1931: 42–62 and Strömberg; more recently, Kindstrand, Tzifopoulos, and Lardinois, all with extensive bibliography. On modern paroemiography, see below.

⁹Lang 58–67. For more on Lang’s survey of Herodotean *gnomai*, see below.

¹⁰Lang 65.

¹¹Lang 52.

essentially “a storyteller whose view of the world and whose modes of explanation are rooted...in the tradition of his craft.”¹² Accordingly, he takes issue with those scholars who see a “theory of history” expressed in the Herodotean maxim that “human happiness never abides in the same place” (1.5.4).¹³ Gould contends that a proverb or maxim cannot provide an explanation of historical events because it “does not claim to put forward the sort of general truth that...[can] be verified or falsified” by future events. In other words, a proverb or gnome “is not an assertion that any counter-example will render void.” A counter-example will simply elicit a contradictory proverb, without challenging the validity of the first one: “‘Look after the pennies; the pounds will look after themselves’...exists happily side by side with ‘Penny wise, pound foolish,’ just as ‘Too many cooks spoil the broth,’ does not exclude ‘Many hands make light work.’” Since proverbs and *gnomai* are “generalizations which permit contradiction and conflicting interpretations,” Gould concludes, they have no explanatory power. Consequently, Herodotus’ use of such generalizations should not be confused with “an explanatory hypothesis of why things happen in human experience.”¹⁴

Gould’s claim that a proverb or gnome cannot function on its own as an explanation of historical causes is certainly valid. To reiterate his point, a proverb such as “It is necessary to look to the end” (1.32.9) can always be countered with “Let nothing go untried” (7.9γ); and the gnome “Man is completely subject to chance” (1.32.4) can be answered by “I find that planning well is the greatest gain” (7.10δ2). Taken by itself, a proverb can never provide a satisfactory historical analysis because, as Gould points out, it is so easily contradicted. But Gould’s argument suffers, I believe, from his assumption that a coherent historical explanation must take the form of an abstract, theoretical statement.¹⁵ As recent scholarship has shown, Herodotus frequently uses a more subtle type of historical explanation, that of repeating patterns of action and result. Literary in form but historical in content, these narrative patterns gain authority with each repetition. Cumulatively, they demonstrate to the reader or

¹²Gould 1989: 63.

¹³Gould 1989: 78–82.

¹⁴Gould 1989: 81–82. Gould suggests that the theme of “reciprocal action,” while not rising to the level of an explanatory principle, is the “most pervasive strand of explanation in Herodotus’ narrative” (82–85). Gould’s point is well taken, although he is not the first scholar to note that Herodotus frequently uses the motif of reciprocal action (or revenge) as an explanation for historical events (see n. 55 below). I hope to discuss the topic of reciprocal action in Herodotus elsewhere.

¹⁵Gould 1989: 80; cf. Gould 1996: 698.

listener that specific types of actions generally lead to specific results.¹⁶ Herodotus' historical explanations are thus frequently embedded in his narrative and are not always expressed as abstract statements. There is no reason why proverbs should not play an important role in this type of historical explanation. Furthermore, Gould seems not to have made use of the wide range of secondary literature on proverbs and their usage. Scholars in the field of paroemiology (the study of proverbs and other wisdom expressions) have produced a substantial body of research dealing with the kinds of questions Gould raises, including that of contradictory proverbs.

The studies of Lang and Gould not only indicate the importance of wisdom expressions in the *Histories* but also raise crucial questions concerning Herodotus' use of them. In order to discover whether the wisdom expressions in the *Histories* do, in fact, serve a purpose beyond the colorful presentation of traditional beliefs, I propose to begin with a review of recent scholarship on proverbs in general and on contradictory proverbs in particular. This survey will then provide the analytical background necessary for a thorough examination of the contradictory *gnomai* in the *Histories*. This analysis will show that contradictory *gnomai* do play an important role in Herodotus' method of historical explanation. While Herodotus' modes of expression may be those of a storyteller, his aims and goals are those of a historian: the preservation of the past and an explanation of historical causes, as outlined in the proem. Herodotus uses traditional storytelling methods (such as contradictory *gnomai*, narrative patterns, and paradigmatic tales) as part of a complex presentation in which the analysis of events is embedded in the narrative. By using the tools of modern paroemiology to understand Herodotus' use of contradictory *gnomai*, we can begin to separate Herodotus' explanations of events from the narrative in which they occur.

II. Modern Paroemiology

Although the proverb is primarily an oral genre,¹⁷ and new proverbs are continually being developed while others fall into obscurity,¹⁸ there is a consensus among scholars concerning the proverb's nature and function. Scholars agree that a proverb is a short and witty general statement, cast in

¹⁶Pioneering work on narrative patterns in the *Histories* was done by Bischoff, Lattimore, Immerwahr 1966, and Wood. More recently see Lateiner 1977 and 1989: 111–44, Flory 1978a and 1987: 13–16, Boedeker 1987 and 1993, Gray, Shapiro 1996 and Dillery.

¹⁷Jason 619, Abrahams and Babcock 415, and Norrick 12.

¹⁸See Barrick for a case study of this phenomenon.

poetic (or heightened) speech, whose form is more or less fixed.¹⁹ A proverb expresses practical wisdom (often a comment on the human condition or moral or practical advice) that is based on experience and is widely accepted by the society in which the proverb circulates.²⁰

The proverb's essential function is to explain a particular situation in light of a generally accepted truth.²¹ Thus, proverbs are used to "sum up a situation, pass judgment, recommend a course of action, or serve as...precedents for present action..."²² Proverbs are frequently used to resolve a conflict²³ or to encourage the listener to modify his behavior in accordance with a generally accepted norm.²⁴ Because a proverb admonishes indirectly, it can be used in situations where direct criticism would be inappropriate.²⁵ In all of its uses, the proverb has an explanatory function: the proverb user attempts to clarify a situation through the use of traditional wisdom.²⁶

Because a proverb's meaning is so closely associated with the context in which it is used, paroemiologists have increasingly emphasized the study of

¹⁹A proverb is a general statement: Jason 617, Norrick 13, Simpson ix. Cf. Aristotle's definition of the gnome: ἔστι δὴ γνώμη ἀπόφανσις, οὐ μέντοι οὔτε περὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον...ἀλλὰ καθόλου..., *Rh.* 1394a21–23. A proverb is a short and witty statement: Taylor 1931: 3–4, Seitel 124, Finnegan 14, Silverman-Weinrich 71, Norrick 31. A proverb is cast in poetic or heightened speech: Finnegan 23, Dundes 53, Silverman-Weinrich 70, Yankeh 10, Norrick 31. Some scholars (e.g., Russo 121 and Norrick 31), argue that the proverb has a fixed form; others argue that its form can evolve, e.g., Taylor 1931: 22–27, Wilson 176–77, Sherzer, Barrick, and Mieder 112.

²⁰A proverb expresses wisdom: Taylor 1962: 3–4, Goodwin and Wenzel 142–43, Norrick 28, Robinson 64. "A proverb is a traditional saying which offers advice or presents a moral in a short and pithy manner," Simpson ix; cf. Russo 121. A proverb's wisdom is widely accepted by society: Taylor 1962: 8, Finnegan 14–15, Jason 617, Abrahams and Babcock 425, Silverman-Weinreich 71, Goodwin and Wenzel 142–43, Yankeh 7. Cf. Aristotle's comment on *gnomai*: διὰ γὰρ τὸ εἶναι κοινὰί, ὥς ὁμολογούντων πάντων, ὁρθῶς ἔχειν δοκοῦσιν, *Rh.* 1395a11–12.

²¹Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 118, Abrahams and Babcock 415–18.

²²Dundes and Arewa 71; cf. Taylor 1965: 7, Yankeh 8, and Norrick 18.

²³Taylor 1931: 87, Messenger, Finnegan 30–31, Norrick 27.

²⁴Silverman-Weinreich 71: "a proverb points out that a given specific occurrence illustrates an accepted general rule. The hearer supposedly already knows the rule, and the intention of the user of the proverb is to link situation and rule." Cf. Jason 619, Goodwin and Wenzel 142.

²⁵Finnegan 28–29.

²⁶Norrick 28. Cf. Lang 65 on Herodotean maxims, quoted above, p. 90.

proverbs in context.²⁷ For example, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has shown that the Anglo-American proverb “A rolling stone gathers no moss” can be used with opposite meanings, depending on whether the moss on the stone is viewed positively or negatively.²⁸ Seitel discusses four different meanings for a single African proverb, depending on whether an older man addresses it to a younger, a guest to his host, a host to his guest, or one man to another regarding a third.²⁹ Because of the growing awareness of the importance of context, modern paroemiologists generally include both the text and the context of the proverbs that they discuss.³⁰

The existence of contradictory proverbs has frequently been noted. Contradictory proverbs often occur in what anthropologists call “verbal duels.” Verbal dueling includes any form of verbal conflict ranging from the disagreements that occur in ordinary conversation to the exchange of opposing arguments at a trial.³¹ Contradictory proverbs naturally occur in verbal duels as each speaker searches for a proverb that will best support his argument. Dundes and Arewa describe an argument between a husband and wife in Nigeria that was composed almost entirely of contradictory proverbs.³² Toward the end of their argument, the husband used the proverb “Untrained and intractable children would be corrected by outsiders” to make the point that if they did not punish their disobedient child, the community at large would take action. His wife replied, “If a man beats his child with his right hand, he should draw him to himself with his left,” thus agreeing to the punishment, but urging that her husband also demonstrate his love. As this exchange illustrates, proverbs cited in verbal duels are not self-contradictory; the opposition between the proverbs serves to clarify the difference between opposing points of view. Proverbs are useful in verbal duels precisely because they have explanatory power: each person believes his argument will be made stronger and more persuasive by the citation of an appropriate proverb.³³

Contradictory proverbs are also found outside of verbal duels, but these, too, are consistent with the proverb’s explanatory function. According to

²⁷E.g., Messenger, Dundes and Arewa, Finnegan, and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett.

²⁸Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 112–13.

²⁹Seitel 128–32.

³⁰See Lardinois and Russo on the importance of context in the study of ancient Greek wisdom expressions.

³¹Farb.

³²Dundes and Arewa 74–75.

³³See Messenger for the importance of contradictory proverbs in the traditional Nigerian judicial system.

Yankeh, many so-called “contradictory proverbs” actually refer to different contexts. He points out that the proverbs “Out of sight, out of mind” and “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” would each be appropriately used in different situations.³⁴ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notes that supposedly contradictory proverbs such as “Haste makes waste” and “Strike while the iron is hot” simply demonstrate that “a proverb’s meaning and ‘truth’ are conditioned by the context.”³⁵ Goodwin and Wenzel argue further that, even when used within a single context, contradictory proverbs can support the process of practical reasoning, because “on reflection they may be found to achieve consistency at a higher level.” For example: “...knowing both ‘Look before you leap,’ and ‘He who hesitates is lost,’ one is inclined to hesitate just long enough to look!” Thus Goodwin and Wenzel conclude that contradictory proverbs can improve deliberation when “the contemplation of contrary proverbs leads to a moderation of impulses,” and hence to the selection of “a sensible middle course.”³⁶

Thus, when considered in context, proverbs do have an explanatory function. By applying a widely accepted truth to a particular situation, a proverb user attempts to explain that situation and, in most cases, to recommend a course of action as well. Contradictory proverbs are no exception. In verbal duels they are used to support opposing points of view; outside of verbal duels, they may apply to different contexts or encourage deliberation about a particular situation.

III. Herodotean Gnomai

Any consideration of the gnomai in Herodotus must begin with the survey made by Mabel Lang as part of her investigation into Herodotus’ narrative techniques.³⁷ Although Lang has identified seventy-four gnomai in the *Histories*,³⁸ four of these are not true gnomai. One is really a fable (7.152.5); one is not a complete statement (6.37.2); and two seem so closely tied to their respective contexts that they cannot be considered general statements (6.86δ and 8.102.1). To the seventy gnomai that remain, I have added sixteen more, making a total of eighty-six gnomai in the *Histories*.³⁹ Of these eighty-six, I have

³⁴Yankeh 10–11; cf. Mieder 239–40.

³⁵Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 114–15.

³⁶Goodwin and Wenzel 142–43; cf. Robinson 64–65.

³⁷Lang 58–67.

³⁸She does not list them all, however, and her citations are sometimes difficult to find, since they are scattered over several pages and often buried in end notes: Lang 58–67 and 161–62 nn. 10–24.

³⁹These are listed in the Appendix. Following Lang, I have excluded oracular gnomai except for the gnome at 1.91.1, which echoes a frequently repeated sentiment in the

identified only six groups or pairs that can in any way be seen as contradicting one another: (1) Gyges and Candaules (1.8–13); (2) The Constitutional Debate (3.80–83); (3) Xerxes, Mardonius, and Artabanus (7.8–10); (4) The Conversation at Abydos (7.47–51); (5) Themistocles and Adeimantus at Salamis (8.59); and (6) Candaules and Xerxes (1.8.2 and 7.39.1).⁴⁰ In the first five of these citations, the contradictory *gnomai* occur in verbal duels, in which two (or three) individuals are debating about a particular issue; only the last pair is not part of a verbal duel. I will consider all of the contradictory *gnomai* in context, to better elucidate the way that Herodotus uses them.⁴¹

1. Gyges and Candaules (1.8–13)

The first three contradictory *gnomai* occur in the Gyges-Candaules story,⁴² in which Herodotus explains how Gyges, Croesus' ancestor and a member of the Mermnad clan, took the Lydian monarchy away from Candaules and the Heraclid dynasty, to whom it had traditionally belonged. Herodotus tells us that Candaules thought his wife was "by far the most beautiful of all women," and that he praised his wife's beauty excessively (ὑπεραίνεων, 1.8.1). As Russo notes, Candaules' excessive devotion to his wife is already a violation of custom, since royal marriages are traditionally based on dynastic, rather than emotional, considerations.⁴³ Since Candaules shared all his important affairs with Gyges, his bodyguard, he wanted to share with him the object of his obsession as well. One day Candaules said to Gyges, "since people trust their eyes more than their ears (ὥτα γὰρ τυγχάνει ἀνθρώποισι ἔοντα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν, 1.8.2), I want you to see my wife without her clothes on." The request strikes Gyges as perverse: "Master, what kind of a sick suggestion is that (λόγον οὐκ ὑγίέα), your ordering me to see my mistress naked?" (1.8.3). Gyges here identifies the king and queen as his master and

narrative (cf. Lang 64). Aside from oracular *gnomai*, I have attempted to make this list as complete as possible, although some *gnomai* may have been inadvertently omitted.

⁴⁰I have been as inclusive as possible in compiling this list.

⁴¹It should be clear that in all of these examples I am not concerned with the question of factual accuracy, i.e., whether these *gnomai* were actually cited, but with the coherence of Herodotus' presentation.

⁴²See Russo for an insightful discussion of the wisdom expressions in this passage; see Cairns for a thorough treatment of the gnome ἅμα δὲ κιθῶνι ἐκδυομένῳ συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ γυνή (1.8.3). For discussions of the passage as a whole, see Aly 34–35, Hellmann 30–33, Benardete 11–15, Evans 1985, Flory 1978b and 1987: 29–38, Konstan 1983: 11–13, Long 9–38, and Arieti 16–23.

⁴³Russo 127. On Candaules' obsessive passion, see Flory 1987: 32 and Konstan 1983: 11–13.

mistress, thus stressing the impropriety of the king's command. As he argues against Candaules' plan, Gyges cites two *gnomai* of his own: "A woman removes her modesty along with her clothes" (ἄμα δὲ κιθῶνι ἐκδυομένῳ συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ γυνή, 1.8.3) and "Fine things were discovered by men long ago from which it is necessary to learn; among them is this: Let each one look to his own" (πάλαι δὲ τὰ καλὰ ἀνθρώποισι ἐξεύρηται, ἐκ τῶν μανθάνειν δεῖ ἐν τοῖσι ἐν τόδε ἐστί, σκοπέειν τινὰ τὰ ἐωυτοῦ, 1.8.4).⁴⁴ Gyges concludes: "I believe that she is the most beautiful of all women, and I beg you not to require me to do unlawful things (ἄνομα, 1.8.4)."

As noted above, wisdom expressions often articulate shared social values and thus can be used to indirectly request the listener to modify his behavior. Gyges' *gnomai* are intended to serve this function. Gyges first warns of permanent damage to a woman's sense of propriety if she reveals herself to someone other than her husband. He then articulates a universal paradigm for appropriate social interaction: Let each one look to his own.⁴⁵ Gyges' *gnome* thus directly contradicts Candaules' suggestion that "seeing is believing," and is clearly intended to do so. Gyges uses a contradictory *gnome* to politely inform the king that his wife should not be revealed to others. Note, too, that Gyges exhorts Candaules to learn from wisdom expressions because of their ancient origin and the traditional values they express (τὰ καλὰ). Gyges' final plea ("I beg you not to require me to do unlawful things") establishes a further opposition between "the fine things" (τὰ καλὰ) discovered by men long ago, and the "unlawful things" (ἄνομα) that Candaules now proposes.

The king, however, persists in his demand until his bodyguard finally agrees. That night Gyges hides in the royal bedroom and watches the Queen undress, but the Queen notices him as he tiptoes out of the room. Realizing immediately that her husband is behind the scheme, the Queen says nothing, but she confronts Gyges the next morning, informing him that, because he has "acted contrary to custom" (ποιήσαντα οὐ νομιζόμενα), he must either kill Candaules (who planned the deed) or he himself must die (1.11.2–3). That night, Gyges kills Candaules as he sleeps and takes possession of his wife and kingdom. The Delphic Oracle later confirms his position as king, although

⁴⁴This last quotation includes not only the *gnome* itself ("let each one look to his own"), but also a brief explanation of the value of a wisdom expression (its basis in traditional wisdom) and its proper social function (influencing behavior).

⁴⁵Plato later gave this sentiment an important role in his ideal republic: *R.* 4.441d12–e2 and 10.620c3–d2. See Lateiner 1989: 141 for the thematic importance of this *gnome* to the *Histories*.

warning darkly that Candaules and the Heracleidae will take revenge on the Mermnads in the fifth generation (1.13.2).

In this story of how the Heracleidae lost their power, Candaules is presented as a foolish king who does not understand the norms of his own society. Gyges, on the other hand, is presented as knowing the right course of action, although he twice proves unable to take it.⁴⁶ The contradictory *gnomai* in this passage do not contradict themselves; they are used to clarify and support the two opposing positions. Furthermore, both of Gyges' *gnomai* are validated by subsequent events, though not in the way that Gyges had anticipated. By inciting the bodyguard to kill his king, the Lydian Queen *does* "remove her modesty along with her clothes," although her purpose in doing so is to defend the social norms that have been transgressed.⁴⁷ And because Gyges failed to "look to his own," Croesus, his fifth generation descendant, will be punished (1.13.2).

2. The Constitutional Debate (3.80–83)

Herodotus' use of contradictory *gnomai* to delineate opposing viewpoints in a verbal duel can also be seen in the Constitutional Debate. The seven Persian conspirators, after removing the Magian impostors from the royal throne, meet to decide on what form of government to establish for the Persians. At this meeting, three types of government are proposed: democracy, oligarchy and monarchy. The arguments in this passage have been much discussed,⁴⁸ but what has not, I believe, previously been noted is the fact that each of the three arguments ends with a gnome.

⁴⁶See Long 31–32 and Flory 1987: 37–38 on the problematic aspects of Gyges' choice; cf. Flory 1978b.

⁴⁷As Cairns (82 n. 26) explains, the Queen's message to Gyges is that the right to see her naked "can belong to only one man." In forcing Gyges to make the difficult choice of becoming either a murderer or a dead man, the Queen steps out of her subordinate role.

⁴⁸See Vlastos, Immerwahr 1966: 101, Benardete 84–87, Ostwald 178–79 and 107–8, Lasserre, Evans 1981 and 1991: 57–58, Flory 1987: 130–35, and Lateiner 1989: 167–70. Discussions concerning the sources of Herodotus' debate are perhaps best seen as disagreements about the relative importance of different influences. In view of Herodotus' repeated insistence that the debate actually occurred (3.10.1 and 6.43.3), it is clear that there was some Persian influence, unless one is willing to argue that Herodotus was deliberately lying (cf. Fehling 120–22). Ostwald (178–79) argues for a full Persian substrate while Evans (1981: 81–84) argues for a more attenuated Persian influence, but both scholars agree that Herodotus interpreted whatever Persian information he received in terms of contemporary Greek political discussions.

Otanes first argues that the unlimited power granted to a monarch insures that any man placed in that position will become insolent, lawless and jealous.⁴⁹ He then suggests that they institute a democracy, which, he claims, is characterized by equality under the law (ἰσονομία), accountability and open discussion.⁵⁰ Otanes summarizes his proposal with a gnome: “for everything lies in the many” (ἐν γὰρ τῷ πολλῷ ἐνὶ τὰ πάντα, 3.80.6).

Megabyzus agrees with Otanes about the dangers of a monarchy, but argues that a democracy is even more dangerous, since a mob is inherently foolish, ignorant and undisciplined. He suggests that they grant power to a select group of top men (including themselves, of course), and concludes with the gnome “it is reasonable that the best men make the best plans” (ἀρίστων δὲ ἀνδρῶν οἶκός ἄριστα βουλευμάτων γίνεσθαι, 3.81.3). The juxtaposition of ἄριστα and ἀρίστων adds force to his argument.

Darius agrees with Megabyzus that rule by the people breeds corruption (κακότητα), but argues that oligarchy produces stasis and bloodshed; the rule of one best man (ἀνδρὸς ἐνὸς τοῦ ἀρίστου, 3.82.2) would be the best solution. Darius then notes that the Persians have been ruled by a monarch since Cyrus brought them their freedom, and concludes with the gnome “do not destroy the good customs inherited from our fathers” (πατρίους νόμους μὴ λύειν ἔχοντας εὖ· οὐ γὰρ ἄμεινον, 3.82.5). By using this gnome, which expresses a sentiment similar to that of Gyges, that it is necessary to learn from “the fine things discovered by men long ago” (1.8.4), Darius affirms a principle of action that supersedes the arguments proposed for each particular type of government. A majority of the conspirators then vote for Darius’ view (3.83.1), and a monarchy is soon established with Darius at its head.⁵¹

The fact that these three gnomai contradict one another contributes to their explanatory power. Because the first two speakers’ gnomai summarize their opposing views, they indicate deep divisions within the conspiracy as to the best form of government to establish for the Persians. These differences are resolved only by Darius’ appeal to their valued ancestral customs, a principle that a majority can uphold.⁵² Thus Herodotus uses these three speeches, together with

⁴⁹Otanes cites a gnome to support this contention: φθονός δὲ ἀρχῆθεν ἐμφύεται ἀνθρώπῳ (3.80.3).

⁵⁰See Vlastos 2–6 and Ostwald 108.

⁵¹The deceitful means by which Darius obtains the kingship is a separate issue (3.85–86), although it is worth noting that an omen from Zeus seems to confirm Darius’ selection (3.86.2). See Lateiner 1990 for a discussion of Herodotus’ generally favorable presentation of artful deception.

⁵²Evans 1991: 58; cf. Flory 1987: 131–32.

their contradictory *gnomai*, to explain why, in his view, the conspirators decided to preserve the monarchy: when they could not agree on a particular form of government on the basis of its own merits, they chose to preserve the traditional customs that had served them well.

3. Xerxes, Mardonius, and Artabanus (7.8–10)

The next group of contradictory *gnomai* also occurs within a verbal duel in which an important political decision must be made. In this passage, Mardonius, Artabanus and Xerxes express opposing views concerning the proposed Persian attack against the Greeks. Xerxes' invasion of Greece is perhaps the most important action of the *Histories*, and Herodotus' presentation of the decision-making process is correspondingly long and complex. The present analysis, however, will be limited to a consideration of the contradictory *gnomai* and their role in the deliberation process.⁵³

At 7.8.1 Xerxes calls a meeting of the highest-ranking Persians to announce his intention of attacking Greece and to request their military aid. In outlining his reasons for the attack, Xerxes first mentions three general reasons for invading a foreign power (Persian *nomos*, religion, and emulation of his predecessors) and three specific reasons for the attack against Greece (glory, land acquisition and revenge). As Xerxes becomes more excited, however, he reveals a different motivation:

We will make the Persian land coterminous with the heaven of Zeus.
For the sun will look down on no other land sharing a border with
ours, but I will make all of their lands into one single land for you, as
I march through all of Europe.... Thus, both the innocent and the
guilty alike will bear the yoke of slavery to us (7.8γ1–2).

Xerxes' stated intention to conquer the world casts doubt on his claim to be following Persian *nomos*, since Herodotus elsewhere reports that the Persians traditionally considered Europe to belong to the Greeks (1.4.4 and 9.116.3).⁵⁴ Xerxes' vow to enslave "both the innocent and guilty alike" also belies his claim to be seeking revenge.⁵⁵

⁵³For discussions of this passage, see Pohlenz 120–24, Immerwahr 1954: 30–33 and 1956: 272–76, Evans 1961, and F. Solmsen 8–12.

⁵⁴For the claim that Xerxes was in fact following Persian *nomos*, see Evans 1961 and 1991: 23–28.

⁵⁵There are several passages throughout the *Histories* in which Herodotus speaks approvingly of men and women who pay retribution (τισίς) for injustices they have caused, e.g., 3.126–28, 6.71–72, 6.74–75, 8.105–106, 9.64; at 3.108 there is an example

Herodotus here presents Xerxes' plans for the expedition as marred by excessive ambition and even megalomania,⁵⁶ but Mardonius, motivated by his own hopes of becoming the governor of Greece (7.6.1), enthusiastically supports Xerxes' plans. First he flatters the monarch (7.9.1), then belittles the Greeks as poor fighters (7.9α-β), while praising the Persians as the greatest fighters of all (ἀνθρώπων ἄριστοι τὰ πολέμια, 7.9γ). He stresses Xerxes' strong numerical advantage (πληθος τὸ ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ νέας τὰς ἀπάσας, 7.9γ), and concludes his speech with a gnome: "But let nothing go untried; for nothing comes automatically, but all things tend to come to men through trying" (ἔστω δ' ὦν μηδὲν ἀπείρητον· αὐτόματον γὰρ οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ πείρης πάντα ἀνθρώποισι φιλέει γίνεσθαι, 7.9γ). Thus, after first minimizing the risks, Mardonius encourages Xerxes' plans by focusing on the gains which can only be won "through trying."

Herodotus' next comment is revealing: "The other Persians were silent, since they did not dare to express an opinion opposite to the one that had been put forward" (7.10.1). After rousing speeches by Xerxes and Mardonius focusing only on the benefits to be gained, none of the Persians present favored making the attack. Their consistent lack of enthusiasm (cf. 7.14) may indicate a more realistic assessment of the gains and risks involved. Only Artabanus dares to openly question Xerxes' plan, relying on his close familial relationship with the king (πάτρως, 7.10.1). While Xerxes and Mardonius had glossed over the dangers of the expedition, Artabanus emphasizes the risks. He begins by discussing Darius' failed attack against the Scythians, noting that the Greeks "are far better fighters than the Scythians" and are "said to be the best fighters (ἄριστοι) on both sea and land" (7.10α3), thus challenging Mardonius' claim that the Persians are the best fighters of all (ἄριστοι, 7.9γ). If the Greeks were to win a sea battle and destroy the Hellespontine bridge, Artabanus continues, disaster would ensue, as almost happened to Darius during the Scythian campaign (7.10β2-γ). Artabanus then asks Xerxes to reconsider the expedition, supporting his point with a gnome: "For planning well is the greatest gain" (τὸ γὰρ εὖ βουλευέσθαι κέρδος μέγιστον, 7.10δ2). Artabanus' gnome is meant as a direct challenge to Mardonius' claim that "all things come to men through trying." In Artabanus' view, the advice to "try anything" is foolish, because any attempt not supported by careful planning is bound to end in failure.

of τίσις in the natural world. See Pagel, Pippidi, de Romilly, Flory 1987: 23-48, Lateiner 1989: 141-44, Gould 1989: 82-85, Evans 1991: 19-20, and Gray 194-200 for discussions of τίσις in Herodotus as a means of restoring a proper balance.

⁵⁶F. Solmsen 9, Fornara 88, Lateiner 1989: 129.

Artabanus' next two *gnomai*, "The god likes to cut down everything that stands out" (φιλέει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολοῦειν, 7.10ε) and "The god does not allow anyone to 'think big' other than himself" (οὐ γὰρ ἔᾤφρονέειν μέγα ὁ θεὸς ἄλλον ἢ ἑωυτόν, 7.10ε), recall Solon's maxim ἐπιστάμενόν με τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὼν φθονερόν (1.32.1). They directly challenge Mardonius' point that Xerxes will have the advantage of size (7.9γ) and are also critical of Xerxes' plans for world domination.⁵⁷ Artabanus returns to the theme of planning near the end of his speech: "To always act in haste brings disaster, from which great penalties often result; but good things come with delay" (ἐπειχθῆναι μὲν νυν πᾶν πρῆγμα τίκτει σφάλματα, ἐκ τῶν ζημίαι μεγάλοι φιλέουσι γίνεσθαι· ἐν δὲ τῷ ἐπισχεῖν ἔνεστι ἀγαθὰ, 7.10ζ). As Artabanus begs Xerxes to delay military action until he has considered the matter more carefully, he again contradicts Mardonius' maxim to "let nothing go untried."

Although Artabanus later changes his mind under the influence of divinely-inspired dreams (7.12–18) and encourages Xerxes to undertake the expedition, here he argues strongly against it.⁵⁸ Artabanus' *gnomai* in this passage are intended to contradict Mardonius': each man cites *gnomai* to support his argument and to persuade Xerxes that his view is correct. Furthermore, just as in the other verbal duels in the *Histories*, one side will later be vindicated at the expense of the other. When Xerxes' expedition ends in disaster, the reader or listener will recall that Mardonius' gnome "Let nothing go untried" had been opposed by Artabanus' two *gnomai* "Planning well is the greatest gain" and "To act in haste always brings disaster." Thus, Herodotus uses the opposing *gnomai* in their immediate context to summarize the two opposing arguments, but, in the larger context of the *Histories* as a whole, the two sets of *gnomai* illustrate the validity of Artabanus' view.⁵⁹

It is important to note that the *gnomai* presented by one side in a Herodotean verbal duel are always proved correct by later events; one side ultimately "wins" the duel. Thus, the contradictory *gnomai* in the *Histories* do more than simply explain the motivation of particular historical agents; they

⁵⁷For Herodotus' programmatic use of Solonian wisdom, see Shapiro 1996.

⁵⁸For the role of the gods in encouraging the invasion of Greece to go forward, see Immerwahr 1954: 33–37, Marinatos, and Shapiro 1994. The precedent for a deceptive dream had been set at *Il.* 2.5–83.

⁵⁹Herodotus' use of *gnomai* is closely linked with the warner or wise adviser theme. I am currently working on a study of the theme of advice in the *Histories*, a topic which has not been re-examined since Bischoff and Lattimore.

show, in retrospect, that one view of events was more accurate than the other. This is an important means of Herodotean historical explanation.

4. The Conversation at Abydos (7.47–51)

About five years later (7.20.1), Xerxes and Artabanus sit on a hill at Abydos, viewing the enormous Persian army and navy, before Xerxes crosses the Hellespont into Europe.⁶⁰ As Xerxes shows Artabanus his vast armament, covering all the visible land and sea (7.45), he asks him whether, if the dream had not appeared to him, he would still advise against making the attack (7.47.1).⁶¹ In framing the question in these terms, Xerxes is asking Artabanus to judge the expedition solely on its merits, without the divine help he believes they were promised (7.18.3). Xerxes assumes that the great size of his forces will ensure an easy victory (7.48), and he expects Artabanus to say so as well. But Artabanus sees danger in the very things Xerxes is most counting on: the great size of their forces and the possibility that the Greeks will not oppose them (7.8γ1–2). Artabanus first notes that, because the navy is so huge, there is no harbor large enough to shelter it in a storm, citing the gnome “Learn that misfortunes rule men, men do not rule misfortunes” (μάθε ὅτι αἱ συμφοραὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἄρχουσι καὶ οὐκ ὠνθρωποι τῶν συμφορέων, 7.49.3).⁶² He then describes the famine that may result if, because of their success, the army marches too far to maintain adequate provisions (7.49.5).⁶³ Both of Artabanus’ fears will soon come true: Xerxes’ navy is severely damaged by storms (7.188 and 8.12). Later, after the Persian defeat at Salamis, his retreating army is forced to eat grass, leaves and tree bark in order to survive (8.115.2–3). Artabanus concludes his speech with a gnome: “That man is best who is fearful in planning, because he considers everything he will suffer, but bold in action” (ἀνὴρ δὲ οὕτω ἂν εἴη ἄριστος, εἰ βουλευόμενος μὲν ἄρρωδέοι, πᾶν ἐπιλεγόμενος πείσεσθαι χρῆμα, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἔργῳ θρασὺς εἴη, 7.49.5). Although Artabanus no longer advises against making the attack, he is still urging Xerxes to plan it more carefully in order to minimize the dangers of unforeseen misfortunes. Artabanus’ *gnomai* consistently advocate the importance of careful planning in an uncertain world.

⁶⁰For discussions of this passage, see Bischoff 60–63, Pohlenz 132–33, Immerwahr 1954: 41–44 and 1966: 75, F. Solmsen 21–23, Flory 1978a, and Konstan 1987: 63–64.

⁶¹This is parallel to Croesus’ first showing Solon his great wealth and then asking him who was the happiest man he had ever seen; cf. Flory 1978a: 148 and Konstan 1987: 68.

⁶²Cf. Solon’s gnome at 1.32.4: πᾶν ἐστὶ ἀνθρώπος συμφορῇ.

⁶³At 7.49.5: ὥς οὐδενὸς ἐναντιευμένου, λέγω τὴν χώρην πλεῦνα ἐν πλεονί χρόνῳ γινομένην λιμὸν τέξεσθαι. For the interpretation of this passage see Lateiner 1989: 130.

But in his reply Xerxes pointedly rejects the need for careful planning: “It is better to be bold in everything and suffer half of what you fear, than to fear everything in advance and not to suffer at all” (κρέσσον δὲ πάντα θαρσέοντα ἡμῶν τῶν δεινῶν πάσχειν μᾶλλον ἢ πᾶν χρῆμα προδιδυμῶντα μηδαμὰ μηδὲν παθεῖν, 7.50.1). Xerxes’ gnome is meant to contrast with Artabanus’ in form as well as content. Whereas Artabanus had begun with the phrase “that man is best (ἄριστος),” Xerxes replies, “it is better (κρέσσον)...” Where Artabanus had advised Xerxes to “be bold in action” (ἐν δὲ τῷ ἔργῳ θρασύς εἶη), Xerxes prefers to “be bold in everything” (πάντα θαρσέοντα). While Artabanus praises the man who “is fearful because he considers everything he will suffer” (ἄρρωδέοι, πᾶν ἐπιλεγόμενος πείσεσθαι χρῆμα), Xerxes criticizes the man who “fears everything in advance” (πᾶν χρῆμα προδιδυμῶντα).

Xerxes’ opposition to Artabanus now becomes more pointed. Using a gnome reminiscent of Mardonius’ “Let nothing go untried” (7.9γ), he declares: “Gains usually go to those who are willing to act, not to those who consider everything and hang back” (τοῖσι τοίνυν βουλομένοισι ποιεῖν ὥς τὸ ἐπίπαν φιλέει γίνεσθαι τὰ κέρδεα, τοῖσι δὲ ἐπιλεγόμενοις τε πάντα καὶ ὀκνεοῦσι οὐ μάλᾳ ἐθέλει, 7.50.2). Xerxes’ use of the term τὰ κέρδεα recalls Artabanus’ gnome at 7.10δ2 (τὸ γὰρ εὖ βουλευέσθαι κέρδος μέγιστον εὐρίσκω ἔόν), and highlights his rejection of it. Xerxes sees planning as nothing but a coward’s excuse for inaction (cf. his dismissive reply to Artabanus at 7.11.1).

Xerxes next argues that if previous Persian kings had held Artabanus’ views, or if they had had advisers like Artabanus, they would never have acquired a great empire. Xerxes caps his argument with a gnome: “Great gains are achieved through great risks” (μεγάλα γὰρ πρήγματα μέγαλοις κινδύνοισι ἐθέλει καταιρέεσθαι, 7.50.3). But Herodotus’ account does not support Xerxes’ claim. The successful military actions made by Xerxes’ predecessors were endorsed by his advisers.⁶⁴ On the other hand, Croesus, Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius might not have suffered defeat if they had listened to the cautionary advice they received.⁶⁵ The *Histories* show that great gains are

⁶⁴Harpagus advises Cyrus to organize a Persian revolt against the Medes (1.124), and to use camels against Croesus’ Lydian cavalry (1.80). Herodotus notes that Cyrus may have received advice on how to capture Babylon (1.191), and Phanes, a mercenary soldier from Halicarnassus, gives Cambyses crucial advice in his march against Egypt (3.4).

⁶⁵Sandanis advises Croesus not to attack Cyrus (1.71); Tomiris advises Cyrus to leave her territory while he is still alive (1.212); the Ethiopian king advises Cambyses not to attack his people (3.21.3); and Artabanus advises Darius not to attack the Scythians (4.83). Some of the passages cited in this and the previous note are discussed by Lattimore.

achieved, not through great risks as Xerxes claims, but through moderate risks supported by careful planning.

Xerxes concludes his speech by re-affirming his aspirations to world domination while scoffing at Artabanus' fears: "Having conquered all of Europe, we will return home, having encountered no famine anywhere, nor having suffered anything else unpleasant" (ἄχαρι, 7.50.4; cf. χρηστὰ πρήγματα, 7.47.1). Xerxes' predictions of a complete and painless victory indicate a stubborn refusal to acknowledge the dangers they are about to face. In his reply, Artabanus cites one more gnome stressing the need for better planning: "And therefore take to heart this ancient saying (τὸ παλαιὸν ἔπος), since it was well said: the end is not always clear at the beginning" (τὸ μὴ ἄμα ἀρχῇ πᾶν τέλος καταφάνεσθαι, 7.51.3).⁶⁶ These are Artabanus' final words in the *Histories*.

Artabanus' gnomai have consistently emphasized the importance of forethought and planning. But Xerxes' gnomai, too, are consistent: "It is better to be bold in everything," he says, "Great gains are achieved through great risks." Herodotus has presented the verbal duel between Xerxes and Artabanus in order to highlight Xerxes' impatience for action and his willful ignorance of the dangers he is about to incur. The eventual failure of Xerxes' expedition and the almost total destruction of his forces will soon reveal the folly of his "just do it" approach. By clarifying the opposition between Xerxes' and Artabanus' views through the use of contradictory gnomai, and then juxtaposing their argument with the eventual outcome, Herodotus provides a partial explanation for the Persian military defeat. Because he believed in being bold and taking risks, Xerxes did not adequately plan his campaign; he raised a force that was too large to fight effectively, as events at Thermopylae and Salamis later showed. By articulating two consistent but opposing viewpoints, each summarized by gnomai, and then showing that one of these two views was proved correct, Herodotus uses the contradictory gnomai as a means of historical explanation.

5. Themistocles and Adeimantus at Salamis (8.56–59)

A final example of contradictory gnomai in a verbal duel is the argument between Themistocles and Adeimantus as to whether the allied Greek fleet should fight the Persians at Salamis or withdraw to the Peloponnese. Although Herodotus treats their altercation with some humor, it is clear that a crucial decision is about to be made.

⁶⁶Cf. Solon's gnome to Croesus at 1.32.9: σκοπέειν δὲ χρή παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτήν κῆ ἀποβήσεται.

When the Greek fleet at Salamis hears that the Persians have taken Athens, some of the generals immediately board their ships and set sail; those who remain simply vote to retreat to the Isthmus (8.56). When Themistocles returns to his ship, one of his crewmen persuades him that withdrawing to the Isthmus would mean the destruction of Greece. Themistocles then returns to the Spartan commander Eurybiades, who reconvenes the generals for another meeting (8.58). But before Eurybiades can explain why he has called them, Themistocles begins to speak passionately in favor of staying at Salamis. Adeimantus, the Corinthian general, interrupts him with the gnome: “Themistocles, in the games, those who jump the gun are flogged” (᾿Ω Θεμιστόκλεες, ἐν τοῖσι ἀγῶσι οἱ προεξανιστάμενοι ῥαπίζονται, 8.59.1). But Themistocles replies with a contradictory gnome, and, Herodotus implies, wins the verbal duel between them: “And he said, releasing himself, ‘but those who are left behind are not crowned’” (ὁ δὲ ἀπολυόμενος ἔφη· Οἱ δέ γε ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι οὐ στεφανοῦνται, 8.59.1).

In this brief exchange, Herodotus uses contradictory *gnomai* to characterize the two speakers and clarify their opposing points of view. Adeimantus, the Corinthian general, who is no doubt particularly anxious for the fleet to withdraw to the Isthmus, wishes to shame Themistocles and prevent the others from taking him seriously. Themistocles, however, shows himself to be quick-witted and resourceful by coming up with a gnome that blunts the force of Adeimantus’ remark. The contradictory *gnomai* in this passage focus our attention on the opposing strategies of these two very different men. The events at the Battle of Salamis later demonstrate the wisdom of Themistocles’ plan.⁶⁷

As we have seen, the contradictory *gnomai* in the *Histories* that occur in verbal duels are part of Herodotus’ historical analysis. In each of the five cases discussed above, the opposing speeches with their supporting *gnomai* serve to clarify the main positions when an important political or military decision must be made.⁶⁸ But Herodotus himself does not maintain a neutral position on these issues. The fact that one view is supported by later events is the key to Herodotus’ historical analysis. The Greek victory at Salamis was, in Herodotus’

⁶⁷Herodotus elsewhere shows Themistocles using threats, bribery, and deceit to pressure the Greek fleet to remain and fight, first at Artemisium (8.4–5) and then at Salamis (8.61, 8.75, 8.80). Herodotus’ portrayal of Themistocles is somewhat controversial. According to Evans 1991: 77, Herodotus portrayed Themistocles as “a political opportunist who used his opportunism and political skill to save Greece.” Cf. Fornara 66–72 and Konstan 1987: 70–72. For the view that Herodotus presents an essentially negative portrait of Themistocles, see Patterson 146–48 and Waters 1985: 142–43.

⁶⁸On Herodotean speeches see L. Solmsen 1943, 1944 and Waters 1966.

view, the turning point of the Persian War (7.139; cf. 8.57.2 = 8.68β2), while the Peloponnesian generals' desire to withdraw to the Isthmus nearly cost them their victory (7.139.4; cf. 8.94). Xerxes' blind ambition, his foolish trust in the enormous size of his armament, and his lack of strategic planning were crucial factors in his defeat. Herodotus uses these verbal duels, with their contradictory *gnomai*, to emphasize what he sees as the causes of historical events.

6. Candaules and Xerxes (1.8.2 and 7.39.1)

I hope I have demonstrated that Herodotus uses contradictory *gnomai* within verbal duels to clarify opposing views on important issues and, by juxtaposing the verbal duel with the outcome of events, to indicate which side "wins." The final example of contradictory *gnomai* in the *Histories* occurs outside of a verbal duel; when considered in context, however, it is clear that even these *gnomai* contribute to Herodotus' coherent presentation of events, if not to his analysis of them. As discussed above, Candaules cites the gnome "People trust their eyes more than their ears" (1.8.2) to encourage his bodyguard to violate a cultural norm. In his reply, Gyges does not respond to the content of Candaules' gnome (that is, he does not argue that people actually trust their ears more than their eyes), but responds directly to the impropriety of the king's request: "I beg you not to require me to do unlawful things" (1.8.3–4). Xerxes' gnome at 7.39.1, though expressing the opposite point of view, is similarly used to justify an inappropriate action. In his march through Sardis on his way to attack the Greeks, Xerxes stays at the home of a wealthy Lydian named Pythius, probably Croesus' grandson.⁶⁹ Pythius entertains Xerxes lavishly, and Xerxes responds with even greater generosity (7.29). But later, after a troubling omen, an eclipse of the sun (7.37.2–3), Pythius begs Xerxes to allow the eldest of his five sons to stay home from the war. At this, Xerxes becomes enraged (κάρτα ἐθυμώθη) and lectures Pythius: "Now understand this well, a man's spirit dwells in his ears" (εὖ νυν τόδ' ἐξεπίστασο, ὥς ἐν τοῖσι ὡσὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἰκεῖ ὁ θυμός, 7.39.1). Xerxes explains that the θυμός either fills the body with joy or swells in anger, depending on what it hears. Since, after hearing Pythius' request, Xerxes' θυμός is now full of anger, he cuts Pythias' eldest son in two, sets one half on either side of the roadway, and marches his army between them (7.39.3).⁷⁰ Herodotus frequently shows Persians engaging in the disfigurement

⁶⁹See How and Wells II.138. For discussions of the Pythius logos, see Aly 171–72, Flory 1987: 59–60, and Evans 1988.

⁷⁰Evans 1988 argues that Xerxes' act may be a religious ritual, but this possibility is not considered by Herodotus; cf. How and Wells 2:145 and West 52–53.

of the body or the mutilation of corpses,⁷¹ and, as Pausanias states in rejecting the suggestion that he impale Mardonius' corpse (9.79.1), the Greeks blame such action in the Persians and they consider this to be a distinction between the barbarians and themselves.⁷² Xerxes' violent response to Pythius' request helps characterize the king as barbaric and impulsive, unable (or unwilling) to restrain his θυμός (cf. θυμωθεῖς, 7.11.1 and ἐθυμώθη at 7.238.2). Like Candaules, Xerxes misuses a gnome to justify his action. The fact that Candaules trusts the eyes while Xerxes follows his ears only emphasizes the similar impulsiveness of their actions and the irrelevance of the gnomai used to support them. Neither eyes nor ears should be trusted, but rather good judgment, which both Xerxes and Candaules significantly lack. I am not suggesting that Herodotus intends his audience to compare the two contradictory gnomai and note the underlying similarities between them. But I do want to stress that, even outside of verbal duels, contradictory gnomai in Herodotus do not simply cancel one another out. In these two parallel passages, Herodotus emphasizes the two kings' similar misapprehension of what good sense requires.⁷³

IV. Conclusion

While the proverbs in Herodotus' *Histories* do reflect contemporary modes of thought, they also have an explanatory function. Contradictory gnomai are used in verbal duels not only to clarify and distinguish two (or more) opposing points of view, but also (after one of these views has been proved correct by later events) to provide an explanation of why events turned out the way they did. The Persians retained their monarchy not because they saw no other alternative, but because they decided to reaffirm their traditional form of government. Xerxes, who inherited that monarchy, raised an oversized and ill-planned expedition aimed at world conquest, but refused to take into account the dangers

⁷¹Cambyzes mutilates Amasis' corpse (3.16.1); Cyrus cuts off Smerdis' ears (3.69.5); Intaphernes cuts off the ears and noses of Darius' messenger and guard (3.118.2); Oroetes kills Polycrates and impales his corpse (3.125.3); Darius intends to impale his Egyptian doctors (3.132.2); Zopyrus mutilates his own body to help Darius take Babylon (3.154.2); after capturing Babylon, Darius impales the heads of three thousand of its foremost citizens (3.159.1); Xerxes kills Sataspes and impales his body (4.43.6); Xerxes impales Leonidas' head (παρενόμησε, 7.238.2); and Amestris disfigures Masistes' wife (9.112). When Pheretima (who is Greek) mutilates and impales her defeated enemies (4.202.1), Herodotus relates that she was punished by the gods for "excessively violent revenge" (λίην ἰσχυραὶ τιμωραῖα, 4.205); cf. Africa and Chiasson.

⁷²On Herodotus' depiction of physical mutilation as a barbarian trait, see Hartog 142 and 332–34, Lateiner 1989: 139, Hall 158–59 and Gray 202.

⁷³For further similarities between the two kings, see Wolff.

that were involved. While Xerxes hampered his own expedition through blind impulsiveness, the Greeks' courageous decision to remain and fight at Salamis is presented as the key to their victory.

Beyond the explanation of specific events, Herodotus uses repeating patterns of opposing *gnomai* compared with later results to provide larger explanatory principles. Proverbs expressing the transitory nature of human happiness and the concomitant need for careful planning are validated again and again throughout the *Histories*, forming a kind of leitmotif to the whole. Herodotus, of course, does not rely solely on *gnomai* for his complex presentation of historical events, nor are the events described by contradictory *gnomai* the only important factors in his account of the Persian Wars. Nevertheless, Herodotus' use of the contradictory *gnomai* does play a significant role in his historical explanation. Herodotus may use traditional wisdom and other literary methods, but he uses them as a historian to explain the causes of historical events.⁷⁴

⁷⁴I would like to thank Charles C. Chiasson and Alexander P. D. Mourelatos for their helpful comments on this paper, as well as the *TAPA* editor, Marilyn B. Skinner, and the anonymous readers for the journal.

Appendix:
Eighty-six Gnomai in Herodotus' *Histories*⁷⁵

Book 1

1. 1.5.4: τὴν ἀνθρωπηίνην...εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τῷ τῷ μένουσαν.
2. 1.8.2: ὧτα γὰρ τυγχάνει ἀνθρώποισι ἐόντα ἀπιστότερα ὀφθαλμῶν.
3. 1.8.3: ἅμα δὲ κιθῶνι ἐκδυομένῳ συνεκδύεται καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ γυνή.
4. 1.8.4: πάλοι δὲ τὰ καλὰ ἀνθρώποισι ἐξεύρηται, ἐκ τῶν μανθάνειν δεῖ ἐν τοῖσι ἐν τόδε ἐστί, σκοπέειν τινὰ τὰ ἐωυτοῦ.
5. 1.32.1: τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὼν φθονερόν...
6. 1.32.4: πᾶν ἐστί ἄνθρωπος συμφορή.
7. 1.32.8: σῶμα ἓν οὐδὲν αὐταρκές ἐστί.
8. 1.32.9: σκοπέειν δὲ χρὴ παντὸς χρήματος τὴν τελευτὴν κῆ ἀποβήσεται.
9. 1.74.4: ἄνευ γὰρ ἀναγκαίης ἰσχυρῆς συμβάσις ἰσχυραὶ οὐκ ἐθέλουσι συμμένειν.
10. 1.87.4: ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῇ [εἰρήνῃ] οἱ παῖδες τοὺς πατέρας θάπτουσι, ἐν δὲ τῷ [πολέμῳ] οἱ πατέρες τοὺς παῖδας.
11. 1.91.1: τὴν πεπρωμένην μοῖραν ἀδύνατά ἐστί ἀποφυγεῖν καὶ θεῶ.
12. 1.96.2: τῷ δικαίῳ τὸ ἄδικον πολέμιόν ἐστί.
13. 1.120.3: παρὰ σμικρὰ γὰρ καὶ τῶν λογίων ἡμῖν ἔνια κεχώρηκε.
14. 1.207.1: τὰ δέ μοι παθήματα ἐόντα ἀχάρिता μαθήματα γέγονε.
15. 1.207.2: κύκλος τῶν ἀνθρωπηίων ἐστί πρηγμάτων, περιφερόμενος δὲ οὐκ ἐξ αἰεί τοὺς αὐτοὺς εὐτυχεῖν.

Book 2

16. 2.120.5: τῶν μεγάλων ἀδικημάτων μεγάλοι εἰσὶ καὶ αἱ τιμωρίαι παρὰ τῶν θεῶν.
- 17S. 2.173.2: οὕτω Αἰγύπτιοι τ' ἂν ἠπιστέατο ὥς ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς μεγάλου ἄρχονται.

⁷⁵All gnomai are taken from the citations in Lang 58–67 and 161–62 nn. 10–24, except those designated with “S,” which were added by the present author.

Book 3

18. 3.36.1: ἀγαθόν τοι πρόνοον εἶναι, σοφὸν δὲ ἢ προμηθίη.

19S. 3.38.4: νόμον πάντων βασιλέα...εἶναι.

20. 3.40.2: τὸ θεῖον ὥς ἔστι φθονερὸν.

21. 3.43.1: ἐκκομίσαι τε ἀδύνατον εἶη ἀνθρώπῳ ἄνθρωπον ἐκ τοῦ μέλλοντος γίνεσθαι πρήγματος.

22. 3.52.5: φθονέεσθαι κρέσσον ἐστὶ ἢ οἰκτίρεσθαι...

23. 3.53.4: ἡ φιλοτιμίη κτῆμα σκαίων.

24. 3.53.4: μὴ τῷ κακῷ τὸ κακὸν ἰῶ.

25. 3.53.4: πολλοὶ τῶν δικαίων τὰ ἐπιεικέστερα προτιθεῖσι.

26. 3.53.4: πολλοὶ δὲ ἤδη τὰ μητρῶια διζήμενοι τὰ πατρῶια ἀπέβαλον.

27S. 3.53.4: τυραννὶς χρήμα σφαλερόν, πολλοὶ δὲ αὐτῆς ἐρασταὶ εἰσι.

28S. 3.53.4: μὴ δῶς τὰ σεωυτοῦ ἀγαθὰ ἄλλοισι.

29. 3.65.3: ἐν τῇ γὰρ ἀνθρωπηίῃ φύσει οὐκ ἐνῆν ἄρα τὸ μέλλον γίνεσθαι ἀποτρέπειν.

30. 3.72.2: πολλά ἐστι τὰ λόγῳ μὲν οὐκ οἶά τε δηλῶσαι, ἔργῳ δέ· ἄλλα δ' ἐστὶ τὰ λόγῳ μὲν οἶά τε, ἔργον δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπ' αὐτῶν λαμπρὸν γίνεται.

31S. 3.72.4: ἔνθα γάρ τι δεῖ ψεῦδος λέγεσθαι, λεγέσθω.

32. 3.80.3: φθόνος δὲ ἀρχῆθεν ἐμφύεται ἀνθρώπῳ.

33S. 3.80.6: ἐν γὰρ τῷ πολλῷ ἐνὶ τὰ πάντα.

34. 3.81.3: ἀρίστων δὲ ἀνδρῶν οἶκός ἄριστα βουλευμάτων γίνεσθαι.

35S. 3.82.5: πατρίους νόμους μὴ λύειν ἔχοντας εὖ· οὐ γὰρ ἄμεινον.

36. 3.127.2: ἔνθα γὰρ σοφίης δεῖ, βίης ἔργον οὐδέν.

37. 3.134.2: ἵνα καὶ Πέρσαι ἐκμάθωσι ὅτι ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς ἄρχονται.

38. 3.134.3: αὐξομένῳ γὰρ τῷ σώματι συναύξονται καὶ αἱ φρένες, γηράσκοντι δὲ συγγηράσκουσι καὶ ἐς τὰ πρήγματα πάντα ἀπαμβλύνονται.

39S. 3.134.6: ἅμα ἔπος τε καὶ ἔργον ἐποίηε.

Book 4

40S. 4.205: ἀνθρώποισι αἱ λίην ἰσχυραὶ τιμωρίαι πρὸς θεῶν ἐπίφθονοι γίνονται.

Book 5

41. 5.24.3: κτημάτων πάντων ἐστὶ τιμιώτατον ἀνὴρ φίλος συνετός τε καὶ εὖνοος.

Book 6

42. 6.1.2: τοῦτο τὸ ὑπόδημα ἔρραψας μὲν σύ, ὑπεδήσατο δὲ Ἀρισταγόρης.

43. 6.11.2: ἐπὶ ξυροῦ γὰρ ἀκμῆς ἔχεται ἡμῖν τὰ πρήγματα.

Book 7

44. 7.9γ: ἔστω δ' ὦν μηδὲν ἀπειρήτον· αὐτόματον γὰρ οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ πείρης πάντα ἀνθρώποισι φιλέει γίνεσθαι.

45. 7.10δ2: τὸ γὰρ εὖ βουλευέσθαι κέρδος μέγιστον εὐρίσκω ἐόν.

46. 7.10ε: φιλέει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολοῦειν.

47. 7.10ε: οὐ γὰρ ἔῃ φρονέειν μέγα ὁ θεὸς ἄλλον ἢ ἑωυτόν.

48S. 7.10ζ: ἐπειχθῆναι μὲν νυν πᾶν πρῆγμα τίκτει σφάλματα, ἐκ τῶν ζημίαι μεγάλαι φιλέουσι γίνεσθαι· ἐν δὲ τῷ ἐπισχεῖν ἔνεστι ἀγαθὰ.

49. 7.10η2: διαβολὴ γάρ ἐστι δεινότατον.

50. 7.11.3: ποιέειν ἢ παθεῖν πρόκειται ἀγών.

51. 7.16α: ἴσον ἐκείνο...φρονέειν τε εὖ καὶ τῷ λέγοντι χρηστὰ ἐθέλειν πείθεσθαι.

52S. 7.16α2: ὡς κακὸν εἶη διδάσκειν τὴν ψυχὴν πλέον τι δίξησθαι αἰεὶ ἔχειν τοῦ παρεόντος....

53S. 7.18.2: πολλά τε καὶ μεγάλα πεσόντα πρήγματα ὑπὸ ἡσόνων.

54. 7.18.2: ἐπιστάμενος ὡς κακὸν εἶη τὸ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμείειν.

55. 7.39.1: ἐν τοῖσι ὥσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἰκείη ὁ θυμός.

56. 7.46.2: ὡς βραχύς εἶη ὁ πᾶς ἀνθρώπινος βίος.

57. 7.46.4: οὕτως ὁ μὲν θάνατος μοχθηρῆς ἐούσης τῆς ζόης καταφυγὴ αἰρετωτάτη τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ γέγονε, ὁ δὲ θεὸς γλυκὺν γεύσας τὸν αἰῶνα φθονερός ἐν αὐτῷ εὐρίσκεται ἐών.

58S. 7.47.1: μηδὲ κακῶν μεμνώμεθα χρηστὰ ἔχοντες πρήγματα ἐν χερσὶ.

59. 7.49.3: αἱ συμφοραὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἄρχουσι καὶ οὐκὶ ὠνθρωποὶ τῶν συμφορέων.

60. 7.49.4: εὐπρηξίης δὲ οὐκ ἔστι ἀνθρώποισι οὐδεμία πληθώρα.
61. 7.49.5: ἀνὴρ δὲ οὕτω ἂν εἴη ἄριστος, εἰ βουλευόμενος μὲν ἄρρωδέοι, πᾶν ἐπιλεγόμενος πείσεσθαι χρῆμα, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἔργῳ θρασὺς εἴη.
62. 7.50.1: κρέσσον δὲ πάντα θαρσέοντα ἡμῖσι τῶν δεινῶν πάσχειν μᾶλλον ἢ πᾶν χρῆμα προδευμαίνοντα μηδαμὰ μηδὲν παθεῖν.
63. 7.50.2: εἰδέναι δὲ ἄνθρωπον ἐόντα κῶς χρὴ τὸ βέβαιον;
64. 7.50.2: τοῖσι τοίνυν βουλομένοισι ποιέειν ὥς τὸ ἐπίπαν φιλέει γίνεσθαι τὰ κέρδεα, τοῖσι δὲ ἐπιλεγομένοις τε πάντα καὶ ὀκνέουσι οὐ μάλα ἐθέλει.
65. 7.50.3: μεγάλα γὰρ πρήγματα μεγάλοισι κινδύνοισι ἐθέλει καταρῆεσθαι.
66. 7.51.1: ἀναγκαίως γὰρ ἔχει περὶ πολλῶν πρηγμάτων πλεῦνα λόγον ἐκτεῖναι.
67. 7.51.3: ἐς θυμὸν ὧν βαλεῦ καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν ἔπος ὥς εὖ εἴρηται, τὸ μὴ ἅμα ἀρχῇ πᾶν τέλος καταφάινεσθαι.
68. 7.104.2: οὐκ ὧν οἶκός ἐστι ἄνδρα τὸν σῶφρονα εὐνοίην φαινομένην διωθέεσθαι, ἀλλὰ στέργειν μάλιστα.
69. 7.157.3: τῷ δὲ εὖ βουλευθέντι πρήγματι τελευτῇ ὥς τὸ ἐπίπαν χρηστὴ ἐθέλει ἐπιγίνεσθαι.
70. 7.160.1: ὀνειδεα κατιόντα ἀνθρώπων φιλέει ἐπανάγειν τὸν θυμόν.
71. 7.162.1: ὑμεῖς οἴκατε τοὺς μὲν ἄρχοντας ἔχειν, τοὺς δὲ ἀρξομένους οὐκ ἔξειν.
72. 7.162.1: ἐκ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ τὸ ἔαρ...ἐξαπαίρηται.
73. 7.173.4: ἄρρωδίη ἦν τὸ πείθον.

Book 8

74. 8.59.1: ἐν τοῖσι ἀγῶσι οἱ προεξανιστάμενοι ῥαπίζονται.
75. 8.59.1: οἱ δὲ γε ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι οὐ στεφανοῦνται.
76. 8.60γ: οἰκότα μὲν νυν βουλευομένοισι ἀνθρώποισι ὥς τὸ ἐπίπαν ἐθέλει γίνεσθαι· μὴ δὲ οἰκότα βουλευομένοισι οὐκ ἐθέλει οὐδὲ ὁ θεὸς προσχωρεῖν πρὸς τὰς ἀνθρωπείας γνώμας.
77. 8.68γ: τοῖσι μὲν χρηστοῖσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων κακοὶ δοῦλοι φιλέουσι γίνεσθαι, τοῖσι δὲ κακοῖσι χρηστοί.

78. 8.142.5: βαρβάροισι ἐστὶ οὔτε πιστὸν οὔτε ἀληθὲς οὐδέν.

Book 9

79. 9.16.4: ὅ τι δεῖ γενέσθαι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀμήχανον ἀποτρέψαι ἀνθρώπων.

80. 9.16.4: οὐδὲ γὰρ πιστὰ λέγουσι ἐθέλει πείθεσθαι οὐδεῖς.

81S. 9.16.5: ἐχθίστη δὲ ὀδύνη [ἐστὶ] τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι αὕτη, πολλὰ φρονέοντα μηδενὸς κρατέειν.

82. 9.17.4: κρέσσον γὰρ ποιεῦντάς τι καὶ ἀμυνομένους τελευτῆσαι τὸν αἰῶνα ἢ περ παρέχοντας διαφθαρῆναι αἰσχίστῳ μόρῳ.

83S. 9.27.4 : καὶ γὰρ ἂν χρηστοὶ τότε ἐόντες ὡυτοὶ νῦν ἂν εἶεν φλαυρότεροι καὶ τότε ἐόντες φλαῦροι νῦν ἂν εἶεν ἀμείνονες.

84. 9.54.1: ...ἄλλα φρονεόντων καὶ ἄλλα λεγόντων.

85. 9.122.3: φιλέειν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν μαλακῶν χώρων μαλακοὺς ἄνδρας γίνεσθαι.

86S. 9.122.3: οὐ γάρ τι τῆς αὐτῆς γῆς εἶναι καρπὸν τε θωμαστὸν φύειν καὶ ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς τὰ πολέμια.

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CHAPTER FIVE

EPIC HERITAGE AND MYTHICAL PATTERNS IN HERODOTUS

Deborah Boedeker

The *Histories* is a work of monumental originality, and one that springs from monumental traditions. Readers of Herodotus both ancient and modern have found the imprint of Homeric epic on all levels of his text, from the occasional use of special poetic words, to literary tropes such as set speeches and dialogues, to overall range and purpose. Herodotus occasionally refers to epic characters and deeds; moreover, story-patterns familiar from myths emerge from time to time in the *Histories*—but attributed to historical characters and situations. Without wishing to minimize the extent to which Herodotus is a fifth-century author with contemporary intellectual and political concerns, I will consider in this chapter how epic and mythical traditions interact with his work, both by shaping the narrative of events and by influencing the scope and style of the work as a whole.

Herodotus Homērikōtatos?

In the second century BC, an elegant elegiac inscription listing Halicarnassus' many claims to fame was set up in Herodotus' hometown.¹ Prominent among the sources of civic pride is a list of literary figures, headed by Herodotus, who is described as 'the pedestrian (i.e. prose) Homer of historiography' (*ton pezon en historiaisin Homēron*). A few generations later, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, as if paraphrasing the inscription, wrote that Herodotus produced *pezēn phrasin* 'pedestrian speech' that resembled 'the most powerful (*kratistē*) poetry' (*On Thucydides* chap. 23; 6.865). Other ancient critics seem to have agreed

¹ Cf. Isager's *editio princeps* (1999), with further commentary by Lloyd-Jones (1999).

with Dionysius. The first-century CE author of *On the Sublime* called Herodotus (along with Stesichorus, Archilochus, and Plato) *homērikōtatos* 'most Homeric'.² In the late second century CE, the rhetorician Hermogenes of Tarsus wrote that Herodotus 'uses all kinds of mythical concepts and poetic diction throughout' (*kai gar tais ennoiais muthikais skhedon hapasais kai tēi lexei poiētikēi kekhrētai diholou*: *Id.* 408 Rade). Modern critics too have not failed to find large- and small-scale reflections of Homeric epic in the *Histories*.³

Aristotle, however, writing a century before the Halicarnassus inscription, emphasized the differences between epic and historiography. He maintained that Herodotus' work, with its focus on the particular (what actually happened) rather than the general (what would plausibly happen), would still be history and not poetry—which Aristotle considered a more 'philosophical' genre—even if the *Histories* were put into verse (*Poetics* 9, 1451a–b).⁴ Aristotle also asserted that Herodotean history lacks the kind of organic unity that characterizes poetry (*Poetics* 23, 1459a). For example, when Herodotus reports that the battles of Himera in Sicily and Salamis near Athens were fought on the same day (7.166), Aristotle declares that the two victories have merely a chronological connection in the *Histories*, for they do not share a single goal (*telos*). Aristotle's criticism has itself been called into question,⁵ yet clearly the lines have long been drawn between sophisticated readers of Herodotus who view him as a 'poetic' historian, and those who emphasize the gulf between history and poetry.⁶ A look at convergences and divergences in a few salient areas will help us assess both of these perspectives.

On the broadest level, the parallels are very significant. The *Histories* shares both the *Iliad*'s focus on a great war fought by a coalition of Hellenes and the *Odyssey*'s interest in distant places and foreign cus-

² (Longinus) *Subl.* 13.3. Cf. other ancient sources on Herodotus and Homer, esp. Strabo 1, p. 18; Lucian *De hist. conscr.* 14; more generally, Quintilian 10.1.27 and 10.1.31: *historia est proxima poetis et quodammodo carmen solutum*.

³ See e.g., Asheri (1988) lx–lxi for a concise list of resemblances; also Stambler (1982) 210–12, Huxley (1989), and Herington (1991b).

⁴ Brillante (1990) 104–5, however, points out that myth is also concerned with particulars.

⁵ For a critique of Aristotle's position, cf. Gomme (1954) 73–6, arguing that Herodotus 'regularly forsakes the chronological for a logical order' and is thereby 'the "poet" of his plot'. For Herodotus and tragedy, see Ch. 6 in this volume.

⁶ On Herodotus' own criticism of poetry, see Boedeker (2000) 103–6.

toms; as more than one critic has discovered, Herodotus in some ways resembles the curious and well-travelled Odysseus.⁷ Moreover, both epic and the *Histories* are concerned with preserving memory and conferring glory (*kleos*). In Homeric epic, characters and narrator alike are well aware of the fame that accrues to those who are remembered, presumably in song: Penelope worries that Telemachus, who has slipped off to sea and is now threatened by the suitors on his return, will not even leave behind a name for himself (*Od.* 4.710); Hector, challenging the best of the Achaeans to fight him, hopes that he will kill his man and his *kleos* will never perish (*Il.* 7.91). Homer's Helen at one point even uses the idea of future poetic fame to explain the events 'happening' in epic: she laments to Hector that Zeus placed an evil fate on Paris and herself so that they would become objects of song (*oidimoi*) in the future (*Il.* 6.356–8).⁸

Herodotus stresses even more directly the importance of his narrative for preserving fame. In the Proem to the *Histories* he explains the very purpose of his work as the preservation of memory, '... so that human accomplishments may not become faded (*exitēla*) with time, nor may great and marvellous achievements, some performed by Greeks and some by barbarians, be without their fame (*akleā*).'⁹ Though the importance of preserving fame is common to both genres, they point to slightly different objects of *kleos*. In epic, *kleos* is presented as primarily important for the heroes, the *characters* who will be remembered, whereas Herodotus highlights the great *achievements* (*erga*) of Greeks and barbarians, and more generally 'the things that have come about from human beings' (*ta genomena ex anthrōpōn*).¹⁰ Herodotus' concern with preserving a record of events contrasts somewhat with epic's interest in providing its heroes with immortality.

⁷ For Odysseus-like characteristics of the Herodotean narrator, see Nagy (1990) 231–3 and Marincola (1997b). Herodotus' ethnographic passages differ greatly from those in the *Odyssey*, however, not only in the details supplied but in the focus they receive in the narrative. Herodotus typically describes a wide range of customs (especially sexual and funereal), geographical features and 'wonders' of the natural or human world. The *Odyssey* also describes the ways of others, but only as they affect Odysseus, whereas Herodotus includes ethnographies of many peoples who never cross paths with his protagonists.

⁸ See also Cobet, this volume (Ch. 17, pp. 388–9).

⁹ On the first sentence of Herodotus, see Nagy (1987) with bibliography as well as Bakker, Ch. 1, this volume, with more discussion of *kleos* (ἄκλεα) and ἐξίτηλα.

¹⁰ On the fundamental similarity of ἔργα and γένόμενα here, see Asheri (1988) xviii.

Another important and obvious distinction between the *Histories* and epic is reflected in the first words of each work, which indicate the speaker's source of knowledge about the past.¹¹ The two epic invocations, 'The Wrath sing, goddess, of Peleus' son Achilles', and 'Sing in me, Muse, the man of many turns', call on a source of knowledge very different from that reflected in the opening clause of the *Histories*, 'This is the presentation of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus.' Nonetheless, it is significant that both Herodotus and Homer call attention to their sources of information—the Muse for Homer, his own investigations for Herodotus—as they begin their narratives. Rather than presenting a wholly mimetic work in the manner of drama or fiction, both authors emphasize at the outset that they are telling a story of past events and rely on sources (in part) external to themselves to do so. Herodotus frequently recalls his use of and critical relationship to a variety of sources, most of them oral, in the course of his work, whereas the epic poet very seldom mentions his reliance on the Muse(s)—let alone criticizes the goddess' veracity. Despite these variances, at the beginning of each work (*Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Histories*) the narrator signals that he is not 'making it up'. This factor contributes to the sense of a truth that exists independently of the narrative and serves as a control for it. For all its differences from a Muse-inspired song, Herodotus' text shares with archaic epic the important perception that there is an external referent to the narrative.

In addition to the large-scale resemblances in theme and purpose, the *Histories* in some ways *sounds* like Homeric epic as well. Herodotus' language is a form of Ionic Greek, which was the literary language typical of 'scientific' prose works in his day—attested also in the medical treatises of Hippocrates of Cos, the geographic writings of Hecataeus of Miletus, and the philosophical prose of Heraclitus of Ephesus. This dialect, however, has much in common as well with the earlier Ionic that is the largest component of Homer's traditional poetic language (see Hermogenes *Id.* 336 Rabe), and sometimes that resemblance comes to the fore in the *Histories*.

¹¹ Romm (1998) 20: 'No longer can the Muse be invoked as a guarantor of authenticity; human powers of investigation and reason have been called upon to take the place of this reverend goddess.' Thomas (2000) 267 suggests that Herodotus' Proem 'present(s) a daring mixture . . . of Homeric reference and hints of the currently fashionable language of intellectual activity.'

Especially in the speeches he ascribes to his characters, Herodotus uses a number of phrases that clearly recall the formulations of epic. 'I won't hide it away from you or pretend I don't know . . . but I will tell you exactly', says Pythius the wealthy Lydian to Xerxes, who inquired how rich he was (7.28.1). Menelaus says much the same thing to Telemachus, when asked what news he has of Odysseus: 'I will hide no word of this from you nor will I conceal it' (*Od.* 4.350).¹² Even more strikingly, Syagrus the Spartan tells Gelon, the tyrant of Syracuse, that 'Agamemnon would groan aloud' (*ē ke meg' oimōxeiē*) if he heard that Gelon and the Syracusans had seized the leadership of the Greek forces from the Spartans (*Hist.* 7.159), just as Nestor says that Peleus would do (*ē ke meg' oimōxeiē*) if he saw all the Achaeans shrinking before Hector (*Il.* 7.125).

Herodotus probably did not borrow directly from the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* every expression that has an epic parallel, nor was it necessary for his audience to recall specific Homeric passages whenever such a phrase is used—especially if that phrase is the only 'echo' of epic in its passage. Expressions such as 'I won't hide the truth from you', or 'So-and-So would groan if he heard that . . .' might have originated in epic language but passed into rhetorical commonplaces; they might just as well have come to epic from ordinary speech. For Herodotus' audience such phrases would doubtless have a generally poetic quality (such as Hermogenes *Id.* 336 Rabe attributes to the *Histories*), but probably not a specific referent.¹³

A more developed echo of epic is found in Herodotus' use of the metaphor 'on a razor's edge' (*epi xurou akmēs*) to describe a crisis calling for decisive action. Nestor uses the phrase in rousing Diomedes to warn him of the threatening Trojans:

Now indeed it stands on a razor's edge for all,
whether there will be very great destruction for the Achacans, or survival.

But go now, awaken swift Aias and Phyleus' son,
 since you are younger, if you pity me. (*Iliad* 10.173–6)

In Herodotus' account of the Ionian rebellion, the Phocaeen commander Dionysius, exhorting his fellow Ionians to fight the Persians, speaks similarly:

¹² The following examples and others are collected in Jacoby (1913) 502–3.

¹³ See Giraudeau (1984b) 4–5 for a succinct collection of Homeric images and expressions attested also in Herodotus.

Our affairs are on a razor's edge, men of Ionia, whether we will be free or slaves—and these would be runaway slaves. Now therefore if you are willing to accept hard discipline, there will be toil for you for the moment, but you will be able to overcome the enemy and be free. (6.11.2)

In this case, the situations are closely parallel: a military leader calls for decisive action in a moment of crisis, stating the alternative outcomes ('whether . . . or') and calling for immediate action, as long as his hearer(s) are of a sympathetic frame of mind ('now . . . if you'). In this case and others where the parallels are extensive, the Homeric colouring of Herodotus' narrative is especially strong, and for many readers may even recall a specific passage in epic.¹⁴

Another example shows Herodotus' versatility in using a familiar Homeric expression. Artabanus warns Mardonius that if he persists in his foolish plan to lead the Persian army to Greece, those who stay behind

will hear that Mardonius, having done great harm to Persia, was torn apart by dogs and birds somewhere in the land of the Athenians or the Lacedaemonians, if not even sooner while en route. (7.10 θ 3)

For Herodotus and his audience these words recall the threatening Iliadic image of the unburied corpse, mutilated by scavenging animals on the battlefield (*Iliad* 1.4–5, etc.). Yet in his ethnographic discussion of Persian funeral customs, Herodotus reports:

It is said that the body of a Persian man is not buried until it has been mauled by a bird or a dog. I know for certain that the Magi do this, because they let it happen in public; but the Persians cover corpses in wax before burying them in the ground. (1.140)

The ethnographic passage emphasizes how Persians differ from Greeks: the Magi, at least, welcome a post-mortem fate that Greeks fear—the very fate which the Persian Artabanus foresees for Mardonius. Rather than using the Homeric tag consistently, Herodotus adopts it for two quite different effects: underlining cultural differences in the ethnographic passage, but assuming a common human horror of mutilation by scavengers in the warning speech of Artabanus. Both passages, however, rely for their effect on the audience's familiarity with the Homeric motif of 'dogs and birds'.¹⁵

¹⁴ Huber (1965b) makes the point that Herodotus both unconsciously 'continues' Homeric style and deliberately alludes to or borrows from it. See further below.

¹⁵ The image of a corpse being prey to dogs, or dogs and birds, is not restricted

On a larger scale too, extended sections of the *Histories* bring to mind Homeric passages. The long 'catalogue of ships' in the *Iliad*, describing all the Greek contingents that fought at Troy (2.494–760), finds an echo in Herodotus' equally elaborate catalogue of the units in Xerxes' armada—infantry, cavalry, and fleet—against mainland Greece (7.61–99).¹⁶ Equally reminiscent of a Homeric passage (and one from the same book of the *Iliad*!) is Herodotus' elaborate description of the Dream that disastrously orders Xerxes to invade mainland Greece or suffer dire consequences (7.12–18); of course the consequences of Xerxes' expedition will turn out to be disastrous for the Persians. The Iliadic Agamemnon too is visited by a deceptive dream, which leads him to believe that he will be able to take the city of Troy on that very day; this belief ultimately leads to prolonged fighting and a serious (though not decisive) setback for the Achaeans (*Il.* 2.1–40). In both these cases, Herodotus seems clearly to have based the pattern of his narrative on the *Iliad*.¹⁷

Occasionally Herodotus also echoes the rhythms of epic. For example, he reports that when the citizens of Delphi received an oracle before the battle of Artemisium, directing the Greek allies to pray to the winds, they passed along the advice, and—in a perfect hexameter—'announcing this, they stored away undying gratitude' (*exangeilantes kharin athanaton katethento*, 7.178.2).¹⁸ Such a passage gives Herodotus' report a solemn epic resonance (cf. Hermogenes *Id.* 408 Rabe), here in connection with a rather 'heroic' theme: divine assistance and patriotic solidarity for the allied Greeks.

The striking physical resemblance to epic language, including snatches of hexametric rhythms, may in some instances echo a poetic account that lies behind a particular story in Herodotus.¹⁹ Recently published papyrus fragments of an extended elegy by Simonides on the Battle of Plataea, for example, remind us that poems were

in pre-Herodotean literature to Homer (cf. Soph. *Ant.* 29–30 birds only), but it occurs there so frequently (fifteen times in the *Iliad* and twice in the *Odyssey*) that it would doubtless sound 'Homeric' to Herodotus' addressees.

¹⁶ See Erbse (1992) 125–7 for discussion of Homeric influence on the catalogue of Xerxes' troops.

¹⁷ On the dreams, see also Saïd, this volume (Ch. 6, pp. 142–4).

¹⁸ Hornblower (1994a) 65–9 discusses Homeric speech and rhythms in Herodotus and Thucydides; see also Boedeker (2001) 121–4. Chiasson (1982) similarly looks at traces of tragic diction and meter in Herodotus (see also Ch. 6, note 6 in this volume).

¹⁹ Cf. Boedeker (2001) 123–4.

composed to commemorate all the great battles of the Persian War—all, at least, that were fought on (or near) the Greek mainland and described by Herodotus.²⁰ The Plataea poem, it appears, was famous in Herodotus' time; echoes of it can be detected in fifth-century poetry from Aeschylus to Timotheus (Rutherford (2001) 44, 46). I argue elsewhere that Herodotus knew this poem as well, and relied on it in certain respects in constructing his own scenario of the decisive battle (Boedeker (2001) 121–34).

Occasionally, then, echoes of poems commemorating historical events may account for epic-like language in Herodotus. Even when that is the case, however, it is important to consider why the historian chooses to 'sound' Homeric at certain junctures. In general, hexametric rhythms and Homeric turns of phrase are most apparent in the speeches; these passages are also *homērikōtata* in their vivid mimetic quality. Is Herodotus most likely to use snatches of Homeric language in his characters' speeches simply because these are points of greatest congruence with Homeric narrative technique? Or is the use of epic-sounding language a way for Herodotus deliberately to make a character, or a section of narrative, sound larger-than-life, more heroic, or even more archaic?²¹

Besides its echoes of Homeric passages, great and small, the *Histories* shares many compositional features with Homeric epic. Like an epic poet, for example, Herodotus frequently uses ring composition or 'epic regression' as a way of supplying background information for something discussed in the narrative.²² First an event is mentioned briefly, then its precedents are reviewed in reverse chronological order as far back as necessary; at that point the narrative reverses

²⁰ Parsons (1992) 4–50 (*editio princeps* of *P. Oxy.* 3965) and West (1992) fr. el. 1–22. For discussion of the 'new Simonides', see West (1993) and Boedeker and Sider (2001). On Herodotus and archaic historical poetry, see the important essays of Lasserre (1976) and Verdin (1977).

²¹ Klamp (1930) 392, for example, finds decidedly poetic style, including two examples of tmesis and a high degree of assonance, in a Herodotean passage (2.30–40) dealing with what he judges to be prehistoric magical rites; he concludes that Homeric form matches archaic content.

²² Pearce (1981), citing Krischer (1971) 136 ff. on ring composition in Homeric epic. Pearce's examples include *Hist.* 1.29–30 (how Solon leaves Athens and comes to Sardis), 1.65–9 (Croesus learns that Sparta gained hegemony over Tegea), and 3.1 (why Cambyses goes to war against Amasis). See also Bakker (1997a) 119–22, and Slings, this volume (Ch. 3, pp. 71–3), who discuss ring composition as an 'oral strategy'; see also de Jong, this volume (Ch. 11, pp. 260–1), who deals with ring composition as a narrative strategy.

itself and moves forward in chronological order until the event in the main narrative line is reached again. As Mabel Lang points out, Herodotus, like the epic narrator, inserts digressions right after introducing a new topic, 'where suspense is sufficient to keep the audience involved' (Lang (1984) 7–9), or directs the narrative by asking rhetorical questions—though far more often, and with a more critical attitude, than is the case in epic.²³ In addition, as Hartmut Erbse ((1992) 127–31) demonstrates, the *Histories* closely follows epic techniques for reporting simultaneous actions in different places. Irene de Jong ((1999)) usefully outlines further ways in which Herodotus follows, and differs from, Homeric narratological technique.

The *Histories* resembles Homeric epic not only in structures but in attitudes as well, including a (surprising?)²⁴ lack of chauvinism. Although the Persian Wars are told from a Hellenic point of view, with ethnic and cultural differences highlighted, Herodotus does not in general demonize the 'barbarian' enemy. Brave deeds of Persians (and their allies) as well as Greeks are recorded, as are deliberations and decisions—some wiser or more honourable than others—on both sides. Even Xerxes can receive heroic (or is it ironic?) praise: of all the many thousands in his armada, no one could match him in beauty or stature, to be more worthy to hold power (7.187).

Herodotus' impetus toward (relatively) non-partisan historiography is related to what Christian Meier has called his 'multi-subjective' perspective, as opposed to a record of deeds that glorifies a single monarch or god. Meier (1987) attributes this breadth of perspective to specific political circumstances in fifth-century Greek culture, particularly a tendency toward democratization and a corresponding sense of the individual's role in political decision making. At the same time, however, sympathetic portrayal of the non-Greek enemy is a characteristic deeply embedded in the *Iliad*.²⁵ Both a narrative model and a socio-political attitude, it seems, were available to

²³ Lang (1984) 39–40: 'Unlike Homer's own questions, which seem to invoke the authority of the Muses, [Herodotus'] actually question authority and introduce an element of debate.'

²⁴ Hall (1989) shows how Athenian tragedy, though contemporary with Herodotus' work, took a very different path with regard to the contrast between Greeks and barbarians.

²⁵ Less so the *Odyssey*, which tends to depict Odysseus' enemies, from the Cyclops to the Suitors, unsympathetically. See Strasburger (1972) 25; Gomme (1954) 47, 111–12.

influence Herodotus' portrayal of non-Greeks—along with some non-elites and women—as sympathetic, intelligent, and courageous historical agents.

Hermann Strasburger argues for the profound influence of Homer on Greek historiography; he attributes this especially to the truly historical sense of epic, as seen in its attempt to characterize an era different from the present—one with weapons of bronze not iron, with stronger men and grand palaces.²⁶ As Susanna Stambler ((1982) 212) points out, however, the *Histories*, with its interest in 'first discoverers' and positive developments especially in political institutions, displays a sense of historical *progress* that is quite absent from epic.

Arguably, the most important and far-reaching resemblance between Herodotus and Homer is the mimetic quality of their narratives. Like Homeric epic, the *Histories* not only records the results of past actions, but presents an imaginative, dramatic recreation of how and why the actions took place.²⁷ Related to this is epic's concern with verisimilitude, as seen in its careful exposition of cause and effect (as with the chain of events leading up to Achilles' wrath, clearly developed at the beginning of the *Iliad*), and an emphasis on truthfulness and exactness in reporting: Odysseus at one point even provides a 'source' for information he could not be expected to know himself (*Od.* 12.389–90).²⁸ One of the most effective devices for creating this vividness is the use of speeches to reveal the characters, motives, and fates of historical actors, a technique in which Herodotus is conspicuously influenced by Homer.²⁹ Another salient mimetic feature that the *Histories* share with epic is the frequent description of non-verbal communication—gestures, sounds, postures, expressions that richly express, as Donald Lateiner ((1987) 84) puts it, 'states of being beyond the report of intentional action and conscious communication'. As Lateiner points out, for example, gestures can eloquently indicate transgressive behaviour (the suitor Antinoos throws a footstool at Odysseus the 'beggar', *Od.* 17.462–5; Persian emissaries fondle the breasts of the Macedonian women at Amyntas' court, *Hist.* 5.18),

²⁶ Strasburger (1972) 27–9. Other important discussions also in Huber (1965b), Huxley (1989), Brillante (1990) 98–102, Erbse (1992) 122–32, Romm (1998) 16–17.

²⁷ Fornara (1971a) 35–6, Strasburger (1972) 38–9.

²⁸ Cause and effect, Strasburger (1972) 24–5; exactness of report, *ibid.* 21. See also Immerwahr (1966) 73.

²⁹ Waters (1966) 157–71 and (1985) 68; Asheri (1988) lx with bibliographical footnote.

as well as extremes of emotion (angry Achilles throws down the sceptre, *Il.* 1.245–6; the deposed king Demaratus wordlessly covers his head, *Hist.* 6.67.3).³⁰

How are we to understand the many parallels between Herodotus and Homer? Certain resemblances between epic and history may stem from a common origin rather than from imitation or borrowing. Ernst Risch has argued, for example, that Indo-European celebratory ('feierlich') prose narratives share with narrative poetry certain linguistic/stylistic features, such as the tendency to begin a sentence with a verb.³¹ Mabel Lang, examining Herodotus' compositional techniques such as the placement of digressions, links between passages, use of rhetorical questions, and the like, concludes that these patterns make it easier for an audience to follow the narrative line, and thus are evidence of Herodotus' oral style³²—in other words they are not so much influenced by as shared with Homer. Other scholars prefer to speak of such techniques as typical of epideictic rhetoric, rather than oral origins.³³

It is frequently stated or assumed that Herodotus reflects Homeric style because archaic epic was the only available model for the sustained narrative of great events.³⁴ This idea is supported by the impression that Herodotus' text resembles epic more obviously in the deliberative and action-oriented parts of the *Histories* and less so in the discursive ethnographic sections. This assumption needs to be

³⁰ Lateiner (1987) 85, 93, 103.

³¹ Risch (1985) 8–9 (citing Wackernagel). Although Risch does not comment on this fact, the examples he cites usually include the verb 'to be' at the start of a new episode. See also Fornara's remark ((1971a) 68) on the force of ἦν δέ for Herodotus' introduction of Themistocles (7.143) and the *Iliad*'s of Dolon (10.314). For a linguistic (rather than stylistic) approach to this phenomenon, see Slings, this volume (Ch. 3, *ad ex.* (2a), p. 55).

³² Lang (1984) 68–9 and *passim*; cf. also Nagy (1987), on Herodotus as a *logios* or performer of tales in prose. Johnson (1994) argues against this picture of Herodotus. Huber (1965b) argues that Herodotus both 'continues' Homeric style and deliberately imitates or alludes to it. I note that although a context of oral performance is very likely the origin of Herodotus' epic-like structuring devices, it is far from their only context; ring composition, for example, is widespread even in much later ancient authors writing for highly literate audiences; for a few examples in Roman literature, see Pearce (1981) 89, nn. 4–5.

³³ De Jong (1999) 227–9; see also Thomas (2000) 257–69 and *passim* for arguments that Herodotus presented parts of the *Histories* as oral 'lectures' (and see Bakker, this volume (Ch. 1), on the differences between Nagy's and Thomas' approaches to an 'oral' Herodotus).

³⁴ E.g., Lateiner (1987) 84, Herington (1991b), Erbse (1992) 122–32.

tested and refined; a comprehensive study of where and how the *Historias* uses verbal echoes of epic would illuminate both Herodotus' relationship with his most conspicuous model and the general development of Greek prose.

Oswyn Murray explains Herodotus' resemblance to Homer not by assuming necessity or inevitability: he boldly maintains that Herodotus' many resemblances to Homer 'are part of a conscious attempt to present the history of the Persian Wars as the history of a new Trojan War won by a new race of heroes'.³⁵ In some passages this is surely the case, as for example the battle over the corpse of Leonidas at Thermopylae (7.225) with its unmistakable echo of the long fight over Patroclus (*Iliad* 17). Interestingly, the 'new' fragments of Simonides' elegy on the battle of Plataea (see above) now show that the two wars were seen as analogous significantly before Herodotus. Simonides first recalls the destruction of Troy and the 'undying fame' which the Danaans received from that poet who learned the truth from the Muses; then he summons his own Muse to help him adorn his song to bring 'undying fame' to 'those who marched[?] out of Sparta to ward off the day of slavery' from Greece (Simonides, fr. el. 11.13–28 West). The parallels are astonishingly clear.

Along with so many similarities, however, it is important to remember that Herodotus consciously differentiates his work from epic.³⁶ At several junctures he criticizes poets as untrustworthy sources. The most salient example of this comes in a discussion of what really happened during the siege of Troy (2.116): Herodotus declares that Homer knew the more plausible story that Helen was not really at Troy but in Egypt—yet Homer did not consider that version suitable for an epic poem. Indeed, as a number of scholars have recently argued from very different perspectives, in clearly recalling epic themes and language (especially in the proem), Herodotus is not only paying homage to Homer but challenging his primacy.³⁷

Nevertheless, Herodotus deserves his ancient epithet *homērikōtatos*: his text again and again recalls the language, style, structure, mimetic quality, and sometimes even metre of Homeric epic. It may be

³⁵ Murray (1988) 463. Similarly van Effenterre (1967) 19, cited by Giraudeau (1984b) 4: 'Son histoire des guerres médiques avait forcément pour les Grecs une allure d'épopée. Le style de l'écrivain s'en est souvent ressenti: l'ionien même d'Hérodote est quelque peu "homérisé"'.
³⁶ Cf. Verdin (1977) esp. 60–1, Boedeker (2000) 103–5.
³⁷ E.g., Hartog (1988) 276, 315; Nagy (1987); Thomas (2000) 267.

difficult to determine where Herodotus has deliberately adopted an epic model, in contrast to where his language unconsciously resembles epic discourse. It is no exaggeration, however, to say that without Homeric epic's sustained narrative of great deeds behind it, the *Histories* would not exist at all; and without its variegated reflections of epic style, it would be a very different work.

Herodotus Mythologos?

The text of Herodotus interacts frequently not only with epic narrative but with myths in general—by which I mean traditional, culturally significant stories, often involving gods or heroes. For a connoisseur of rhetoric and style such as Hermogenes, Herodotus' ubiquitous mythic quality (*to muthikon*) is a delightful feature, the source of much of his characteristic 'sweetness' (*glukotēs*, *Id.* 330–1, 408 Rabe). Hermogenes judges those stories to be sweetest that are truly 'mythical' (*muthōdēs*), such as Pan's epiphany to Philippides (*Hist.* 6.105), and somewhat less pleasing the narratives that 'share a little of the mythic quality but are more credible than myths' (330–1 Rabe). In a very different spirit, Aristotle disparagingly refers to Herodotus as *ho muthologos* 'the myth-teller' (*Gen. an.* 3.5.755b6). The epithet in this context is not a comment on Herodotus' use of supernatural stories, however, but on his inaccuracy. In a discussion about how fish reproduce, the philosopher blames Herodotus for passing along the silly tale (*ton euēthē logon*) that the females of one species conceive by swallowing the milt emitted by the males (*Hist.* 2.93). Herodotus himself uses the word *muthos* only twice,³⁸ both times as a label of disapproval directed polemically against those ('the poets' in 2.23, 'the Greeks' in 2.45) who perpetrate implausible information.³⁹ For Herodotus as for Aristotle, *muthos* is someone else's fabulous and incredible story.⁴⁰

There are of course many reports in the *Histories* of objects, events, and customs that would seem implausible to Herodotus and his

³⁸ Nickau (1990) 84.

³⁹ See Marincola (1987) 128–31, Darbo-Peschanski (1987) 112, and Dewald, this volume (Ch. 12, pp. 278–79) on the competitive character of Book Two.

⁴⁰ On this use of *muthos* by Herodotus and the way the term is used against him by later critics, see Hartog (1988) 295–6.

addressees. The historian takes care to distance himself from such *logoi* with the famous disclaimer that he tells what was said but doesn't necessarily believe it (7.152.3), or sometimes by overtly stating his disbelief (as in 8.8).⁴¹ Occasionally he reports a supernatural tale and offers an alternative rationalizing explanation, as with the tale that Poseidon caused a ravine to appear in Thessaly. This is a credible story, Herodotus remarks, for those who attribute earthquakes to Poseidon, since it appears to him that the ravine was made by an earthquake (7.129).⁴² In this story, Herodotus applies the same standards of credibility whether an event took place recently or in the distant past. Yet occasionally, as Justus Cobet discusses in Chapter 17 of this volume (pp. 405 ff.), he seems to make a distinction between a *spatium mythicum* and a *spatium historicum*—especially when he distinguishes the remote era of Minos from 'the so-called human age (*geneē*)' of Polycrates (3.122). Scholars disagree about the degree to which Herodotus conceives of a 'mythical' time in which the world operated differently from 'historical' time; as with many issues in Herodotus, the text allows arguments on both sides.⁴³ In general, however, time and place enjoy continuity in the *Histories*, as do the operating conditions of the world.

More problematic for Herodotus' standing as a historian than his recording of unverifiable events distant in time is his use of 'historical' stories that follow narrative patterns known from myths.⁴⁴ A particularly rich example is the tale of how Cyrus came to power (1.107–30), told in the narrator's own persona rather than identified as 'what they say', but nevertheless replete with elements familiar from myth and folklore.⁴⁵ Prophetic dreams warn King Astyages that his daughter's son will depose him; Astyages orders a trusted courtier,

⁴¹ See also Bakker, this volume (Ch. 1, pp. 13–19), on Herodotus' *historiē*.

⁴² See also 2.54–7: how the priestesses of Zeus came to Dodona from Egypt, and why they are called 'doves'. On the phenomenon in general, cf. How and Wells (1912) 1:32–3.

⁴³ Scholars arguing that Herodotus observes such a distinction include Nesselrath (1996) 276, Vandiver (1991) *passim*, and Shimron (1973). Among those who disagree are Nickau (1990), and Hunter (1982) 103. Brillante (1990) 102 maintains that the heroic past was continuous with the historical period, and not confused with a 'time of origins' or 'age of the gods', which was very different from the age of human beings. See also Raafaub (Ch. 7, n. 36) and Osborne (Ch. 22, p. 799).

⁴⁴ For a discussion of these (short) stories, see Gray, in this volume (Ch. 13).

⁴⁵ For a concise discussion, see Aly (1969) 48–51; see also Saïd, this volume (Ch. 6, pp. 128–29).

Harpagos, to kill the dangerous baby, but Harpagos has not the heart to do so; the royal foundling is 'rescued' rather than killed by a good-hearted herdsman and his wife (and a still more fabulous variant, that the child was fostered by an animal, hides behind the wife's name, 'Bitch', cf. 1.122.3); the true nature of the child is revealed and eventually the prophetic dreams prove true. Intertwined with the widespread legend of the royal foundling is a motif well known from the Greek myth of Atreus and Thyestes: Astyages punishes Harpagos for not killing Cyrus in the first place, by serving him the cooked flesh of his own son (1.118-19). As in the house of Atreus, this trick of cannibalism brings its own revenge, for Harpagos, remembering the fate of his son, is the one who encourages Cyrus to rise up against Astyages (1.123-4).

Herodotus' story of the Spartan king Demaratus provides a second example of a historical character linked with mythical motifs.⁴⁶ Demaratus' co-king Cleomenes challenged his legitimacy, on the grounds that when he was born, the alleged father, King Ariston, declared that the baby could not be his, because it was born only seven months after his wife came to him from her previous husband (6.63, 65). Soon after he was unfairly deposed from his kingship, Demaratus demanded to know the truth about his birth. His mother swore to him that he was the son either of Ariston or of a local Spartan hero, Astrabacus. Astrabacus, she said, had come to her in the guise of her new husband and slept with her soon after her marriage to Ariston; then on the same night the king himself came to her bed—and that was the night she conceived her son (6.69). This tale of the Heraclid king Demaratus closely parallels the birth story of his ancestor Heracles, the son of Alcmena who was loved by Zeus and Amphitryon on the same night; it seems very likely to have been passed along by pro-Demaratus sources at Sparta or elsewhere. In this case, it appears, a mythical pattern applied to a 'historical' event probably originated with Herodotus' sources and was motivated by political or familial reasons.

Perhaps because the legendary elements in the birth stories of Cyrus or Demaratus are so transparent, there has been little temptation for scholars to try to separate factual kernels from mythical

⁴⁶ See further Burkert (1965); see again Said, this volume (Ch. 6, p. 126).

chaff in those tales.⁴⁷ This has not been the case, however, with other stories in which fabulous elements blend with what appear to be historical reports.⁴⁸ A disturbing question arises: can stories that include mythical patterns also incorporate real historical events? A story attached to Periander, who became tyrant of Corinth a generation or two before the accession of Cyrus in Persia, can serve as a test case for this question.⁴⁹

Periander's son Lycophron, learning that his father killed his mother, refuses to have anything to do with his father—including inheriting the tyranny of Corinth. At length he agrees to go to Corcyra to rule the Corinthian colony there. The aging Periander, still anxious to secure his family's dynasty in Corinth, later persuades Lycophron to trade places with him; but before Periander can arrive in Corcyra and take over the rule, the Corcyreans kill Lycophron. In revenge, Periander orders three hundred Corcyrean youths to be sent to Lydia, made into eunuchs, and sold into slavery. On their way to Lydia, however, the boys are given asylum by the Samians, who institute a festival in their honour (3.48, 50–3). Although historians usually assume that at least the outline of this tale is true,⁵⁰ Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood argues forcefully that it is so pervasively based on mythical and ideological constructs, such as the consequences of opposition between fathers and sons, that a historical core cannot be reconstructed with any degree of certainty.⁵¹

Other scholars find mythical and ideological elements within the Periander story without addressing so directly the important question of its historicity. For Michael Stahl (1983) it is a moral-political tale about the depravity of tyranny. For Jean-Pierre Vernant, the whole tale of the Cypselid dynasty reflects the 'crookedness' of the tyrant, from the lameness of Periander's ancestor Labda to his out-of-balance relationship with Lycophron—motifs found also in the myth of Oedipus: 'When the father of history recounts as fact the

⁴⁷ Brelich (1958) 59–60 and *passim* warns against trying to reconstruct history from myths. Brillante (1990) 108–10 provides illuminating discussion.

⁴⁸ See How and Wells (1912) 1:35.

⁴⁹ Aly (1969) 93–5 discusses the many folktale elements in Herodotus' stories of the Cypselids.

⁵⁰ As in *OCD*³ s.v. Periander.

⁵¹ Sourvinou-Inwood (1988); she would allow only that the Cypselid tyranny came to an end soon after Periander's death (p. 181).

events which installed a line of tyrants at the head of Corinth, quite "naturally" he mythologizes' (Vernant (1982) 33).

Each of these accounts is illuminating, yet to see how mythical patterns work in a 'historical' narrative, I agree with Claude Calame that we must take into account the Herodotean context—the discourse of which it is a part and the community to which it was addressed—as well as the mythical schemata that give the story its structure.⁵² Along with elements reflecting Greek familial values and social ideologies, which Sourvinou-Inwood demonstrates so effectively, it seems to me quite plausible that political or philosophical concerns (on the part of Herodotus himself or his sources) would inform a story. Depending on the circumstances in which the tale is told, story-tellers and their audiences are not necessarily concerned only with the familial and social themes so prevalent in myths, especially the myths of Attic tragedy.

The little Periander-Lycophron tragedy is recounted as background to Herodotus' story of an attempted coup by disaffected Samians against their tyrant Polycrates, in the time of Cambyses (3.39-60).⁵³ Polycrates' opponents solicit help from Sparta; Corinth too is happy to assist them in attacking Samos, because somewhat earlier the Samians had rescued the youths of Corcyra whom Periander was shipping to Lydia (3.48). Herodotus comments that Corinth and Corcyra had been at odds ever since Corinth founded its colony at Corcyra; without those hostilities, Corinth would not have joined the expedition against Samos (3.49.1). The grudge between Lycophron and his father Periander is reflected in that between Corcyra and its 'parent' city Corinth (obvious in Herodotus' time: Thuc. 1.38, etc.), and indirectly causes the hostility between Corinth and Samos. This web of resentments, with parent/child hostility at its core, now plays into the hands of the Samians looking for support in their insurrection against Polycrates.⁵⁴ In Herodotus, the political is always (also) personal, and the two often stand in metonymic relationship to one another.⁵⁵ The story of Periander and Lycophron is revealing

⁵² Calame (1990) 281. White (1978) carries this idea further, saying that the kind of discourse (or genre) itself greatly influences the shape of the story. See Sourvinou-Inwood (1988) 168 on mythological 'schemata'.

⁵³ On this story, see also Ch. 6, pp. 126-27, in this volume as well as Ch. 22, p. 503.

⁵⁴ For a different perspective on such webs, see 'the reciprocity model' discussed by Gould (1989) 82-5.

⁵⁵ Benardete (1969) takes a similar approach to the relationship between personal

not only for its connections to the themes of other myths, as Sourvinou-Inwood and Vernant emphasize, but also for its relationship to Herodotus' central historical themes of tyranny and the causes of war.

The problem of historicity in such 'mythologized' accounts remains acute.⁵⁶ It is indisputable that mythical and historical materials converge in the examples discussed. This is to be expected, especially since the stories were orally transmitted; they were orally formed as narratives, for that matter, and were most likely influenced by the shape of myths or folktales from the very beginning, as well as by Homeric and other poetic models (see above). Still, I am a little less pessimistic than Sourvinou-Inwood about the historical core that remains, partly because elements of the story seem to be conveyed in different places (Samos and Corinth, for example). I agree with Carol Dougherty's generalization in her analysis of Greek foundation myths: 'Since Greek colonial legends, like all narratives, are not clear, untroubled reflections of some historical truth but rather are literary representations of that truth, they stand in a complicated relationship to the events they relate' (Dougherty (1993) 7). There is no way around it: that relationship must be analysed for each case, bringing to bear all the kinds of evidence that exist.

Besides presenting some stories that replicate mythical patterns, Herodotus also introduces certain well-known myths (understood by his audience, to be sure, as events that really happened in the past, see Brillante (1990) 101-2) as relevant background to events in his narrative. Of course there is the sequence of rapes between Europe and Asia, culminating in the Trojan War, which Herodotus says the Persian *logioi* present as the cause of hostility between Asia and Europe (1.1-5). In this case, myth (as ancient history) motivates—or provides the alleged justification for—'history'. In several striking instances, however, a character from the heroic past (especially the Trojan War era) is said by Herodotus himself, or by his informants, to cause events that occur in the narrative line.

Herodotus speaks in his own persona about Talthybius (7.133-4, 137).⁵⁷ The herald of the Achaeans at Troy, Talthybius was hon-

tales and historical themes. See further Boedeker (1987) on the themes connected with Demaratus.

⁵⁶ Sebeok and Brady (1979) 12-14, taking a view almost as extreme as Sourvinou-Inwood's, warn against reading the story of Croesus and his sons as history; they see it as 'A Myth about Communication'.

⁵⁷ Cf. Saïd, this volume (Ch. 6, p. 121).

oured at Sparta as a hero and as the ancestor of the city's official heralds. When Darius sent heralds to Sparta demanding earth and water as tokens of submission, the Spartans threw the emissaries into a well; afterwards, their sacrificial omens kept turning out unfavourably. At last, two Spartans volunteered to be executed by Darius' successor Xerxes to atone for the wrongful deaths; they made their way to Susa, but Xerxes spared them. Nevertheless, the wrath of Talthybius worked itself out eventually, the narrator assures us, because the sons of those volunteers ended up being betrayed to and executed by Sparta's later enemies, the Athenians, many years after the attempted atonement.⁵⁸

At the very end of the *Histories*, the wrath of another Achaean warrior is associated with the capture and execution of a Persian (9.116–20). Artayctes, whom Xerxes had put in charge of the Chersonnese, stole treasures from the hero shrine of Protesilaus, the first Greek to die at Troy, and otherwise abused the hero's sanctuary. After the Persian defeat in mainland Greece, the Athenians came to claim the Chersonnese. Artayctes tried to escape but was apprehended and brought back to the town of Sestus for execution. Herodotus reports a story told by the Chersonnesians: on the way back to Sestos, Artayctes observed the dried fish that were being heated for dinner, jumping in the pan as if alive; he exclaimed that this was a sign that Protesilaus, 'even though dead and dried', demanded vengeance from him. I have discussed this story at length elsewhere, arguing that Herodotus alludes to the story of Protesilaus in the assumption that his addressees (familiar at least with his epic identity: *Iliad* 2.695–709) will understand even more of its significance than what is spelled out in the text.⁵⁹

These two examples of 'mythical heroes' who operate on the level of the narrative remind us again of the close relationships drawn between the Trojan and the Persian Wars. Artayctes is even said to refer to Protesilaus as 'a Greek man who invaded [Persian] territory' (9.116), repeating the idea of continuity between the invasions of Achaeans against Troy and Persians against Greece. Gregory Nagy (1987) argues that Herodotus 'subsumes' the subject matter of epic into his own magisterial account: the Trojan War becomes just an

⁵⁸ See the comments of Biraschi (1989) 119–20.

⁵⁹ See Boedeker (1988) for detailed discussion. See also Fisher, this volume (Ch. 9).

early chapter in the universal history of Europe versus Asia. This seems an accurate description of Herodotus' (self-interested) perspective on 'universal history', yet even so Homeric epic and its heroes retain a special cachet, to be shared occasionally with later events.⁶⁰

The stories we have just considered, from their different perspectives, all illustrate that in Herodotus' text the boundary between myth and history is a permeable one. Even beyond the examples where characters are 'shared' between two discourses (such as happens with Talthybius or Protesilaus, who drop in from epic to interact with historical fifth-century characters), or where allusions seem certain (as between the birth stories of Demaratus and Heracles), narrative patterns and concerns may converge (as with Periander/Lycophron and Laius/Oedipus).

For more specific patterns, such as those we have examined in this chapter, the narratives of myth and history can well be expected to overlap, because both are generated in the same cultural climate and reflect its categories and concerns, whether psychological, social, or political. If succession of power and father-son relationships are of great concern in a culture, we should not be surprised to discover them in both mythical and historical tales—or as the Greeks would probably see it, in tales of the distant or more recent past.

Even more broadly, the narrative patterns in Herodotus, Homer, and indeed of all story-tellers may participate in a master narrative, one that Henk Versnel (wryly?) suggests can be ultimately reduced to the biological imperative 'to get'⁶¹—but to explore this unsurpassably reductionist possibility would take us far beyond the parameters of the *Histories*.

⁶⁰ On Herodotus' uses of Homer for political purposes, see Biraschi (1989) 114–15.

⁶¹ Versnel (1990) 60–1, following (and going beyond) Burkert (1980) with its reliance on the narrative morphology of Propp.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AchHist</i>	<i>Achaemenid History</i>
D-K	H. Diels and W. Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 10th ed. (= VS)
<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i>
Fornara	C. W. Fornara, <i>Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War</i> , 2nd ed.
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
K-A	R. Kassel and C. Austin, <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i>
KRS	G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, <i>The Presocratic Philosophers</i> , 2nd. ed.
L-P	E. Lobel and D.L. Page, <i>Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta</i>
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th edition.
ML	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> , revised ed.
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
<i>Syll./SIG</i>	W. Dittenberger, <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 3rd ed.
Tod	M. N. Tod, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i>
VS	H. Diels and W. Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 10th ed. (= D-K).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

HERODOTUS AND HIS SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Simon Hornblower

The study of sources, for which the word *Quellenforschung* has established itself in languages other than its native German, is not a fashionable activity at the beginning of the twenty-first century AD. *Quellenforschung* was rigorous, at times excessively so, in that it tended to assume complete rationality and a modern scientific attitude (preference for the earlier and 'better' over the later and more derivative source, and so forth) on the part of the ancient authors it studied. It assumed, in fact, that ancient authors with their unwieldy and arbitrary collections of papyrus rolls operated like modern scholars in their libraries, who read and write in rooms furnished floor-to-ceiling with shelves which contain good and instantly accessible texts, and who are armed with author-specific lexica and (nowadays) with electronic data-bases which enable them to chase linguistic parallels in a few seconds of time (see Hornblower (1994a) 71 f.). The present chapter is an attempt at the looser rather than the stricter enterprise; it is concerned with what is now known as 'intertextuality' rather than *Quellenforschung*: in fact, with Herodotus' relationship to his literary sources (the relationship of his text to other texts) and to his oral sources (one aspect of the relationship of his text to the world).

How did he handle his sources? How did he acquire and select his material? Why did he sometimes offer critical judgments on his sources but at other times refuse to do so? What criteria did he apply in making critical judgments, and to what extent was he prepared to extrapolate and generalize on the basis of his sources? These are some of the topics I address in the present chapter. Some are of course very hard to answer except by the historical novelist: nobody after 2,500 years can easily say *why* Herodotus followed a particular course of action on some occasions but declined to follow it on others. At most we can try, at the level of detail, to identify patterns of choice and suggest how those patterns might be compatible with broader literary strategies (the pattern in the carpet, as Henry

James called it). There is no guarantee that the historical Herodotus would accept our interpretation even if it could be explained to him.

The present chapter does not accept the results of Fehling's attempt (by no means the first but the most ingenious and thorough-going so far) to show that Herodotus' source-citations are imaginary.¹ Some of Fehling's views will be discussed below.

The notion of 'sources' is easy for us to grasp and to subdivide: oral sources and written sources, individual oral informants and generic oral citations; documentary and non-documentary (poetical, historical, etc.) written sources. These ideas and categories are ours; there is no single and simple Greek word even for 'source'. This is one difficulty. We would want to say that Herodotus uses all the types of source I have just mentioned, although his specific citations of individual named Greek informants are just two in number: Archias of Sparta at 3.55 and Thersander of (Boeotian) Orchomenus at 9.16.² He also cites simultaneously three named priestesses at Dodona at 2.55.3 (Promeneia, Timarete, Nicandra), a rather special case; and he cites one non-Greek, Tymnes agent of Ariapeithes (4.76.6). Precisely the rarity of such individual attributions shows that he did not regard a circumstantial 'I got this from X' claim, where X is a named individual, as conferring any special authority. Generally, Herodotus does not arrange the types of source, which I have given above, in any sort of hierarchy. We certainly cannot assume that he would have given automatic priority to written over oral sources: it has been said recently (Shrimpton (1997) 119 f., cf. 118) that 'Herodotus quotes certain inscribed texts more for celebration than for proof'. But equally we are not entitled to think he would have rated oral sources higher than written ones. Nor can or should we assume that he regarded an appeal to the authority of a source as superior to the exercise of his own intelligence, or to an argument from analogy. It has been pointed out (Luraghi (2001) 142) that he defends his claim that a Persian advocated democracy not by a source-reference but by pointing out that Mardonius installed democracies in Asia Minor some decades later (6.43, referring back to 3.80 ff.).

¹ Fehling (1989). The most recent account and list of Herodotus' source-citations is by Shrimpton and Gillis in Shrimpton (1997) 229–65 = Appendix 1, with list at 249–65; see 231 for the claim that Fehling's examination 'lacks statistical rigour', and (earlier in the page) their conclusion that 'there is no compelling reason to regard items of information attributed to sources as Herodotean fictions'.

² Whose name is given wrongly as Thrasybulus in Fehling (1989) 117.

A second difficulty is that Herodotus, unlike Thucydides, has no initially-placed programmatic statement about how he has used his sources. The relevant chapter of Thucydides (1.22) is so famous that it is hard to grasp how original it must have been, in some of its aspects, when first formulated. Thucydides distinguishes between narrative and speeches, an obvious distinction once made, but there is no comparable explicit statement of this awareness in Herodotus. Thucydides says it was hard for both himself *and for his informants* to remember what was said (there follows his celebrated claim to have compromised between reporting the essence of what was actually said, and giving what was rhetorically appropriate). That he treats speeches before narrative may be interesting in itself for its implications about priorities, uncongenial though those implications may be for us, who like to think that Thucydides was more preoccupied with the demands of his rigorous narrative than with the rhetorically elaborate speeches of which his History is so full. He goes on to state his principles about narrative: he has not derived his accounts of events from *chance informants*, nor put down his own opinion, i.e., offered reconstructions according to ideas of his own, but has subjected to close scrutiny both the events he himself witnessed and those he learnt about from others. Bias and faulty memories of witnesses, leading to inconsistent accounts, made this a hard job.

Here, perhaps, we have more than a personal statement; we have the first critique of Herodotus (not forgetting Thucydides' other predecessors, note the sweeping 'all my predecessors' at 1.97.2). The expression 'not from chance informants or my own reconstruction' is an example of what students of narrative ('narratologists') call 'presentation through negation'.³ The negative formulation implies 'not, as is usually done', or even 'not, as my predecessors have done'. If Herodotus is the main target here, or even one of the targets, it seems that Thucydides did not think much of the informants he took Herodotus to have used, nor did he like the way Herodotus intruded his own reasoning, as in the Persian democracy example mentioned above. But it is noteworthy that even Thucydides, though unlike Herodotus he cites raw documents, including two in dialect, does not mention documents in this methodological chapter (Shrimpton (1997) 101), though to our way of thinking, use of documents would be an obvious way of asserting his own superiority to Herodotus.

³ De Jong (1987) 61–8; Hornblower (1994b) 152–8.

How far was Thucydides' criticism of Herodotus—if that is what it is—justified? If Thucydides meant that Herodotus was uncritical in his choice of sources, the criticism was as we shall see very unfair. But Herodotus laid himself open to it in two ways: first by not setting out his method fully and initially, as Thucydides later did, and secondly by saying on two separate occasions that he regarded it as his job, throughout his work, simply to record what each informant said to him (see 2.123.1 and 7.152.3, where he adds that he is not obliged to believe everything he reports). It is easy to see how this hospitable attitude could be misinterpreted as naive and uncritical.

Did Herodotus really talk to just anybody? Certainly not; if we are interested in the attitudes and behaviour of people other than elites (a problem facing all inquiry into ancient history) we cannot look to Herodotus for help. Anthropologists speak of the 'social surface' of the traditions preserved.⁴ That is an expression for the group from which the tradition stems, and which believes it to be true. The social surface of the traditions in Herodotus is constituted by an intellectual and social elite, whoever exactly he wants us to understand by the *logioi* whom he quotes explicitly three times (1.1.1, where they are Persians, 2.3.1 and 2.77.1 where they are Egyptians; cf. also 4.46.1 of Anacharsis the Scythian). The word *logioi* means (so Gould (1989) 27) 'those with something to say', 'those with a story to tell', and, in the third instance, 'those who made a practice of the memory of the past'.⁵ For Nagy ((1987) 181), Herodotus is himself by implication presented at the very beginning of his *Histories* as one in a long line of *logioi*. However this may be—and Lang ((1987) 204) reasonably objects that Herodotus uses the word only of foreigners, which if it expresses a principle would disqualify himself—it is clear that the appeal to *logioi* is not an appeal to chance informants. That is certainly true both of Archias of Sparta, a member of a distinguished family, one of whose members was honoured with public burial at Samos (an outstanding honour, otherwise well attested only at Athens); and of Thersander of Orchomenus, who was a participant at a very grand banquet, and indeed is expressly called one of the most *logimoi* men in Orchomenus (i.e., 'distinguished',

⁴ Luraghi (2001b) 159; Giangiulio (2001) 135, drawing on the Africanist Moniot (1970) 134 f.

⁵ Nagy (1987) adds more speculatively that the function of *logioi* is to confer *kleos*, 'glory', and suggests that they are thus assimilated to *aoidoi* (poets, singers); on Nagy's approach, see also Ch. 1, pp. 10–12, this volume.

'important'; not the same word as *logios* though etymologically related to it).

But neither the handful of explicit references to *logioi*, nor the two named informants Archias and Thersander, get us far enough. We need to look at evidence in bulk. Before we do so, however, we should note in fairness to Herodotus that when it comes to actual practice, as opposed to statements of method, Thucydides gets us even less far: there are in *his* History absolutely no citations of individual named sources, though naturally inferences can be drawn, especially when he names an individual;⁶ thus Thucydides once (2.5.6) reports a discrepancy between what the Plataeans and Thebans say about some prisoners, and he repeats another between the Athenians and Spartans about when Scione was captured (4.122.6). On the second occasion he adjudicates magisterially between the two versions: 'the truth was more on the Athenian side'.

Let us return to the Herodotean evidence in bulk. There are two main categories: first, those passages where no source is stated but where it is possible to infer the identity of the source (naturally this method also takes account of, but is not the prisoner of, explicit source-citations where they occur embedded in the section of narrative in question); and second, those passages introduced, concluded, or framed by explicit source-citations (9.82 is an example of such 'framing', where a passage is both introduced and concluded by an 'it is said' formula which turns it into a simple compositional 'ring'; see Shrimpton and Gillis in Shrimpton (1997) 234).

The job of identifying Herodotus' unstated sources by inference was carried out by the traditional and eventually very sophisticated techniques of *Quellenforschung*, always alert to the evidential weight of bias; the high-water mark of this technique was Jacoby (1913) cols. 419–67, 'Quellenanalyse des Werkes'. After Jacoby, as after any patient genius, things could not be done better, they could only be done differently. Modern scholarship has lost interest in identifying unspecified sources, but it remains true that for large tracts of Herodotus, Jacoby's long and systematic analysis, book by book, is usually the best place to discover where Herodotus probably got it

⁶ His practice over naming is nearly twice as sparing as Herodotus, so that Thucydidean naming is arguably and occasionally a way of flagging a source, see Hornblower (2000). Even group citations are very few (Hornblower (1994b) 136).

from.⁷ The central Greek sanctuary of Delphi featured extensively as the location of informants in Jacoby's tabulated treatment (with occasional reservations, see Jacoby (1913) col. 402, where he suggests that the Delphian element in the Lydian *logos* or ethnographic section in Book One was added only quite late as part of an 'Umarbeitung' or reworking). This stress on Delphi as a source for Herodotus if anything became more pronounced in the course of the twentieth century (see e.g., Flower (1991)), as the study of Greek religion moved from the margins to the centre of the scholarly stage (Davies (1997) 31). 'The Delphians' are explicitly named as a source very early in the History (1.20, on which see however Fehling (1989) 91), but their evidence is far more pervasive than the explicit citations would suggest. Colonization, for instance, is a theme which recurs all over the History, and it is likely that Herodotus derived much knowledge in this area from the servants of Apollo at Delphi, whose role in the founding of overseas settlements was so large.⁸ Progress has also been made, since Jacoby's time, in identifying Herodotus' unstated Persian informants: Lewis (1985), followed by Murray (1987) 110, suggested that one of Herodotus' sources for Persia was the Greek element in the Persian bureaucracy.

Now for our second category, the explicit source-citations—a much more fashionable object of study in the early twenty-first century. They are governed by two principles; it is an odd fact that though they were established or most clearly and pithily formulated by the sceptical Fehling, they are accepted as valid account of Herodotus' working method even by those scholars (Shrimpton and Gillis in Shrimpton (1997) 231; Luraghi (2001b) 148) who disagree with the negative conclusions which Fehling draws from them. The principles are: (1) the principle of citing the obvious source, and (2) the principle of regard for party bias. Clearly, these principles might be followed by a writer of plausible fiction, but also by an honest writer who did interrogate his sources.

⁷ 'Usually', not 'always'. For a powerful but curiously understudied (because repellent?) section of Herodotus, see Hornblower [forthcoming], an analysis of the story (involving castration and possibly worse) of Hermotimus and Panionius at 8.104–6; Jacoby (1913) fastidiously ignores it.

⁸ Forrest (1957); Malkin (1987); Murray (1987) 105.

The first principle ('the basic rule on which everything else is founded': Fehling (1989) 88) assumes that Herodotus distributed his source-citations 'according to the usual principle of considering who can be supposed to know what' (Fehling (1989) 92). The 'obvious source' is usually an 'epichoric' or regional source. The statement that the Libyans say that cauterizing their children makes them the healthiest of mankind (4.87) is said by Fehling to be an example of Greek theory, falsely attributed to the Libyans because they are the appropriate people to say it. But Fehling's critics observe that this sort of attribution is sometimes best understood not as palpable fabrication or fraud but as a statement about the social surface (see above), the social dimension, of the material reported: 'people are simply made to say, think or report what he supposes any reasonable person would expect them to do' (Shrimpton (1997) 109, quoted by Luraghi (2001) 148 n. 27). In any case, Herodotus may sometimes attribute an item to a source, not in order to verify the information but precisely in order to distance himself from it (Shrimpton (1997) 112; see further below).

Divided source-attributions, i.e., instances where part of a story is attributed to one group, part to another, are explained by Fehling on similar lines, thus the main report of the miraculous appearance of two superhuman figures at Delphi (8.36–7) is assigned to the Persians, but the names of the figures are assigned to the Delphians, who alone could reasonably be expected to 'know' them; but the attributions must—we are told—be false because the whole story assumes that there really was such an event, which in the real world there was not (Fehling (1989) 12–17). Therefore the story has not two origins but one—inside Herodotus' head. This line of approach takes for granted a modern (or Thucydidean) attitude to divine epiphanies: obviously, they did not really happen. Herodotus is not so sure or so dogmatic (see below, pp. 381–2, on Pan, for the care he takes to distance himself by invoking what other people said or believed), and his contemporaries are more likely to have shared his attitude than Thucydides', or ours.

Another 'divided' story, the death of Miltiades, illustrates principle no. 2: regard for 'party bias' (Fehling (1989) 106 ff.). The people of Paros diverge from the story told by the rest of the Greeks in that the Parians say Miltiades died because of an impiety committed on Paros. Is this 'unrealistic' so as to 'give rise to doubts'

(Fehling (1989) 106)? On the contrary, the local stress on the local aspect is entirely natural and plausible, and any Greek would have found it so (on party bias, see Luraghi (2001) 148).⁹

It is, however, unsatisfactory to discuss Herodotus' use of sources as if it were uniform throughout the whole of his enormous text, or uniform from topic to topic. I shall now try to identify some of the differences in the way he handles his material on different occasions.

Let us first look at his different behaviour in different parts of the work. One obvious way of declining to offer a critical judgment on his sources is by presenting his material with no source-attribution at all, thus implying that he accepts the deliverances of his sources or else that he has made a choice between them, or else that he has combined them in some undisclosed way; but in any case he is happy with the result. This, we may say, is the seamless, Thucydidean, approach. In a new and massively well-documented study it has been shown (Shrimpton and Gillis in Shrimpton (1997) 232–49) that source-citations preponderate in the earlier books, especially Books Two (Egypt), Three (Persia) and Four (Scythia; Libya). Book Nine by contrast, which deals with events much closer to Herodotus' own time, and is mainly about Greece, exhibits a very small number of source-citations. The statistical tables are impressive, and show that Herodotus is readier to give citations when dealing with events remote in time, geography, or culture. 'The inference is clear: when Herodotus feels that the item is reliable knowledge, no source citation is required, but an otherwise identical item that cannot be confidently advanced as knowledge is attributed to a source' (Shrimpton (1997) 245 f.; cf. Marincola (1987) 133: 'after Book II he does not detail his travels and the people with whom he came into contact'; see also 132 and 134, discussing the different approach in Books Five to Nine).

Herodotus varies his technique not just progressively through the work but when handling certain specially sensitive topics. I shall confine myself to two, religion and Athenian pre-Persian-War politics. Two fairly recent treatments, by Gould (1994) and Badian (1994), are concerned with different aspects of Herodotus, the religious and the political, but both use the word 'reticence' to describe the problems they have identified.¹⁰

⁹ Note in any case that a Delphic source probably lies alongside the Parian, see Jacoby (1913) col. 445.

¹⁰ Gould (1994) 92, citing Lateiner (1989) 64 ff.; Badian (1994) 127, 'Herodotus' reticence about unpalatable facts'.

Gould has shown that one area where Herodotus was specially sensitive, even embarrassed, was religion, and that this coyness extends to his attitude to his sources for it—notwithstanding his important line of communication to Delphi (above):

Herodotus sometimes feels that he requires additional weight of evidence, that it is or may be impossible to identify the power concerned or be certain of its motive, and that such reports may be better distanced from the rest of the surrounding narrative by being given in *oratio obliqua* [indirect speech]. (Gould (1994) 96)

Gould offers a good example, the story of Aristodicus at Cyme (1.153–160).

Another example, which I have discussed in a different connection elsewhere (Hornblower (2001)) is the epiphany or divine appearance of Pan (6.105–6). The Arcadian god was supposed to have appeared to the runner Philippides, on his way from Athens to Sparta to appeal for help just before the Battle of Marathon in 490. ‘As Philippides himself used to say and as he told the Athenians’—note that this formulation does not necessarily imply that Herodotus personally spoke to him—he had an encounter with Pan in Arcadia, and Pan reproached the Athenians for not honouring him with cult because

he was favourably disposed to the Athenians, had been useful to them in the past and would be useful again. After the battle, when the Athenians’ affairs had turned out well, they believed that what Philippides had said was true and built a shrine to him . . . But on this occasion [in 490] he was sent out on the mission on which he said he had seen Pan.

This chapter is full of interest. The distancing devices are plain: ‘as he used to say’, ‘as he told the Athenians’, ‘on which he said he had seen Pan’. But a doubt remains. The cryptically vague reference to the Athenians’ affairs ‘turning out well’ has been interpreted as an acknowledgment by Herodotus that Pan actually sent help during the Battle of Marathon in the form of a panic (Pan-ic) attack inflicted on the Persian army.¹¹ If Herodotus does mean to imply that there was a Pan-sent panic in the Persian army during the battle,

¹¹ Though this is not agreed: some scholars say that Pan sent panics only to armies at rest, for instance at night. See Borgeaud (1988) 136; Parker (1996) 164 and n. 36, who is more favourable than is Borgeaud to the idea that Pan might have sent his own panic attack.

in other words that there was a *second* and more public epiphany of Pan, it is surprising that he makes no mention of any such thing in his actual battle-description a few chapters later. However, this could be just another instance of Herodotean reticence. The first epiphany is given as something claimed by Philippides, and believed by the Athenians—but only after the second epiphany had provided corroboration for the first. The reporting of the sources is very carefully and unobtrusively managed, and it leaves the issue of Herodotus' own belief strictly unresolved. But there is in the course of the chapter a gathering sense that the epiphany of Pan (perhaps only auditory not visual, see Versnel (1987) 49) was more than a touch of the midday sun.¹²

Religion was not the only area calling for occasional obliqueness and selectivity (a topic I shall address more fully in a moment) in the handling of source-material. Certain political issues were almost equally sensitive and for the same reason. 'Herodotus took great care not to give offence to the powerful, or those who might be: the gods of course, Egyptian no less than Greek...' (Badian (1994) 120).¹³ We can accept that in the normal run of cases, Herodotus cheerfully transmitted 'party bias' (see above) by recording versions in the form 'x is what the people of y say', where x is to the advantage of y (or where x is disobliging to z, who are the enemies of y). But it has been ingeniously shown (Badian (1994), a study in 'subtle silences') that Herodotus hints very delicately indeed at the reasons why Alexander I, king of Macedon was honoured at Athens. Not just for providing ship-building timber, but for mediating the Athenian submission to the Great King of Persia in the late sixth century BC, a submission which looked bad in the period after the Persian Wars of 490–479 BC when the Athenians were the saviours of Greece, at least in Herodotus' presentation (7.139). The facts are there, above all at the end of the crucial chapter (5.73) when Herodotus says that the Athenian ambassadors who made an alliance with the Persian king were 'held in great blame' on their return; what he does *not* say (although modern scholars have incautiously taken him to be saying it) is that the Athenians repudiated the alliance. They did not. 'The fact that he does not say so, but uses a vague phrase about

¹² See further below p. 384, citing Harrison.

¹³ He then proceeds to list some powerful human individuals and groups whom Herodotus was also careful not to offend.

blaming the envoys, once more reveals his technique when he has something to hide' (Badian (1994) 126). His sources left him in no doubt of the truth, but he could not be explicit. ('It is surely inconceivable that Herodotus was told that Alexander was *euergetes* [benefactor] of Athens, but not told why . . . We are forced to conclude that Herodotus deliberately chose to withhold the information' (Badian (1994), 122). Too much was at stake, in the mid fifth century when Athenian heroism against the Persians had become a national myth, so for the moment Herodotus lays aside his normally transparent and ebullient manner. Explicitly critical discussion of and judgment on his sources was in this area, as in some aspects of religion, completely out of place.

Finally, how did Herodotus select his material, and how far was he prepared to generalize on the strength of the selections he had made? Usually, the first part of this question ('how did he select . . .?') is unanswerable, because selection means leaving certain things out, and there are limits to what we can say about what is not there. If we had a full tradition *apart* from Herodotus, we would be in a better position to say 'he did not record event x or custom y' but that would not tell us whether he consciously omitted x or y unless we knew for certain that he was aware of x or y. Sometimes we can feel confident that when dealing with a particular complex of traditions, he has under-reported or rejected elements of which he was well aware. Thus his account or rather accounts of the the foundation by the Theran Battus of Cyrene in North Africa (4.145–59, a narrative which includes the story of Cyrene's mother-city Thera) both resemble, and diverge from, the material in Pindar's *Fourth* and *Ninth Pythian Odes*.¹⁴ For example, the nymph Cyrene (for whom see Pindar *Ninth Pythian*) does not feature in Herodotus; she is not quite a foundress, as Malkin (1994) 173 rightly insists, but he agrees that she is extremely important as 'foreshadowing the "political" foundation/colonization by Battos'. Nor does Herodotus spell out the story of Battus' ancestor Euphemus the Argonaut, who was given a clod of earth by a son of Poseidon, to legitimate his possession of Cyrene (Pindar, *Fourth Pythian*). Herodotus does, however, plainly show his awareness of this story by his casual description of Battus as 'Euphemides', 'descendant of Euphemus' (4.150, part of the Theran version of events).

¹⁴ Dougherty (1993) 136–56; Malkin (1994) 169–79; Giangiulio (2001).

Elsewhere, it is very hard to apply controls to Herodotus' accounts. Thucydides, as I have tried to show elsewhere (Hornblower (1996a) 129–34) is, in the *speeches* which he puts into his agents' mouths, dependent to a remarkable and almost exclusive degree on Herodotus for his 'ancient history' i.e., for events earlier than the Persian Wars. In his *narrative*, Thucydides is more willing to draw on non-Herodotean traditions, but even here there is conspicuous reluctance to move outside the Herodotean groove. A good example is the First Sacred War, allegedly fought in the early sixth century BC for possession of Delphi by a coalition of Greek powers; but not mentioned by Herodotus or (in effect) any source earlier than the fourth century BC. As a multi-state conflict, it would have been very relevant to Thucydides' initial discussion of wars earlier than the Peloponnesian (1.1–20, where he seeks to show that such wars were less great than the Peloponnesian). But he omits it, surely because Herodotus had also omitted it. By contrast, Thucydides includes the Lelantine War fought on Euboea but with international allies—because Herodotus did mention it (Thuc. 1.15; Hdt. 5.99). Before we can say whether Herodotus (or Thucydides) omitted the First Sacred War we need to be sure that the war was historical, and was not an invention of the age of Philip II of Macedon; Davies (1994b) 206 cautiously concludes that the historicity of the war is 'a plausible hypothesis, but no more'. If the war did happen, we have an example of a Herodotean omission not rectified except by some scrappy later evidence.

The reasons for such omissions are inscrutable, but one can make guesses: Apollo giving an oracle about the foundation of Cyrene was one thing, Apollo raping the nymph Cyrene was another, and so was the clod of earth given to Euphemus by the son of Poseidon. That is, Herodotus shrank from including direct as opposed to mediated intervention by a god. (On this topic see Harrison (2000b) 82–92, and cf. above p. 382). As for the First Sacred War, its absence from Herodotus is just a reminder that he was not writing a comprehensive history of archaic Greece (for the question of unevenness in Herodotus' coverage of events before the sixth century, a topic which cannot be discussed here, see the rather different perspectives of Murray (1987) and of Thomas (2001)).

Generalization and extrapolation in Herodotus there certainly is. Some of it is 'gnomic' in character, that is, it offers proverbially expressed summings-up of some facet of human experience. Gould ((1989) 81 f.) rightly insists that such remarks are generalizations only

in a special and partial sense: this sort of utterance does not 'require all subsequent experience to bear it out'. We can add that it is not particularly closely related to any 'source' except in the limited sense that the generalization in Herodotus may take the form of an endorsement of someone else's view, thus 'Pindar was right to say that "custom is king of all"' (3.38). Other generalizations, like that about the superiority of democracy to tyranny (5.78), look like expressions of political opinion masked as generalization. But some of the generalization is more specific and apparently source-derived.

Take three main city-states of old Greece, the Athenians, the Spartans, and the Corinthians. Each is the subject of a bold and celebrated generalizing judgment: the Athenians are the cleverest of the Greeks who are themselves cleverer than the barbarians (1.60), the Spartans value the things of the gods more than the things of men (5.63, surely a Herodotean or possibly an Athenian view, but not a Spartan one), and the Corinthians despise craftsmen less than do other Greeks (2.167). The second and third of these, at least, are much cited by students of Greek religion and Greek economics respectively, and it would be good to be sure that they have some inductive validity. But it is not easy to say whether these and similar generalizations are offered on the strength of accumulated testimony of his sources, the *communis opinio* of the *logioi* Greeks he had spoken to, and that he had spoken to enough Spartans and Corinthians (and to enough non-Spartans and non-Corinthians) to give weight to his judgments; or whether they merely represent his own prejudices, casually and impressionistically arrived at. The cleverness of the Athenians looks more straightforward at first sight: no long training in ancient Greek history is needed to show that there were plenty of clever fifth-century Athenians for Herodotus to talk to. But the generalization must be contextualized. It features in a story about an uncharacteristic piece of Athenian credulity as Herodotus saw it. And these same Athenians are elsewhere (5.97) used to support the paradox that it is easier to fool 30,000 people than one man, because King Cleomenes of Sparta refused help to Aristagoras the Ionian whereas the Athenian democracy granted it and so brought on itself the wrath of the Persian king. The relation of sources to generalization remains elusive. As Momigliano once famously said of Herodotus: 'the secrets of his workshop are not yet all out' ((1966) 130).

For instance, much more work needs to be done on Herodotus' relation to other types of contemporary literary and scientific activity;

thus it has recently been suggested that some of Herodotus' Scythian material has been passed through a 'Hippocratic filter'. That is, there is some sort of debt to contemporary medical inquiry (Thomas (2000) 60, a very guarded formulation). Something similar can be said (Thomas (2000) 162–200) about the language of proof in Herodotus, which shows clear analogies with non-historical writing of the period. But in all this it is very difficult (as Thomas' guarded use of the 'filter' metaphor shows) to know where it is proper to speak of Herodotus' 'use of [specific, possibly identifiable] sources of information' and at what point we should stop talking of 'sources' and talk instead of general occupancy of a shared intellectual milieu.¹⁵ The same is true in many ways of Thucydides as well, but though there is a little ethnography in Thucydides, and though there is an interest in things medical on the part of a man who caught the great Plague but recovered from it (Thuc. 2.48.3), nevertheless Herodotus' cheerful march across the intellectual disciplines takes him across a wider territory and his footprints are that much harder to trace.

¹⁵ See also Chs. 1 and 7, this volume.

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Note: abbreviations for journal titles are according to *L'année philologique*.

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Polycrates and His Brothers: Herodotus' Depiction of Fraternal Relationships in the "Histories"

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POLYCRATES AND HIS BROTHERS: HERODOTUS' DEPICTION OF FRATERNAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE *HISTORIES*

Herodotus' *Histories* contains many stories about and references to brothers. These include extended narratives featuring fraternal protagonists, brief stories involving relationships between brothers, and unelaborated assertions of fraternal connections. Drawing attention to some fraternal relationships more than others, Herodotus explores the consequences of various types of behavior between brothers. Some brothers behave agreeably and cooperatively toward one another, while others fight and even kill one another. Herodotus' interest in the way that brothers treat brothers recalls the role of fraternity in traditional genealogies establishing relationships between ethnic groups. Such genealogies imply that affinity between brothers is somehow natural while discord is aberrant.¹ Herodotus seems to accept this assumption in delineating ethnic propensities toward fraternal harmony or discord. As the only Greek in all of the *Histories* to cooperate with his brothers but then to banish one and kill the other, Polycrates straddles Herodotus' ethnic categories. Polycrates' treatment of his brothers appears atypical and problematic.

In his longer tales about brothers,² Herodotus distinguishes Greek fraternal behavior from non-Greek in a consistent pattern: Greek fraternal relationships demonstrate harmony, while non-Greek fraternal relationships demonstrate discord. Other references to brothers in the *Histories*, however, suggest that this pattern results from the calculated selection of specific stories for expanded treatment. The stories of Scythian brothers, for example, include both types of behavior, and the shorter tales and brief references to brothers³ also include some exceptions to the pattern of Greek fraternal harmony

¹ See J. M. Hall's discussion of the role of genealogy in shaping ethnic identities and relationships, specifically through the assertion of ancestral fraternity, in *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge 1997), esp. 41–65 and 182–85.

² I count nineteen: Cleobis and Biton (1.31), Sesostris and his brother (2.107–108), Egyptian thieves (2.121), Cambyses and siblings (3.30–31), Magian brothers (3.61–79), sons of Targiteus (4.5), sons of Heracles (4.8–10), Saulius and Anacharsis (4.76–77), Scyles and Octamasades (4.79–80), Darius and Artabanus (4.83 and 7.10), Dorieus and Cleomenes (5.42), Hippias and Hipparchus (5.55–56, 62), sons of Aristodemus (6.51–52), sons of Darius (7.2–4), Leonidas and Cleombrotus (7.204–205), Xerxes and Achaemenes (7.236–237), Argive Temenidae (8.137–139), Tisamenus and Hegias, Melampus and Bias (9.33–34), Xerxes and Masistes (9.107–113).

³ I count twenty-four: Adrastus and his brother (1.35), Croesus and Pantaleon (1.92), Sarpedon and Minos (1.173), Hector and Paris (2.120), Cheops and Chephren (2.127), Polycrates and his brothers (3.39), sons of Aristodemus (4.147), sons of Battus (4.160), Darius and Artaphrenes (5.25, 30–31), Aristagoras and Charopinus (5.99), Onesilus and Gorgus (5.104), Xerxes and Achaemenes (7.7), Darius and Artabanus (7.18), brothers of Xerxes (7.64; 7.68; 7.69; 7.72; 7.78; 7.82; 7.97; 7.224–225), Cleandrus and Hippocrates (7.154), Gelon and Hiero (7.156), Xerxes and Ariabignes (8.89).

and non-Greek fraternal discord, particularly in the case of non-Greek brothers, who do not, in these undetailed examples, invariably fight or disagree.⁴ Among the unelaborated descriptions of Greek brothers, however, Herodotus includes only three references to fraternal violence. While two of these episodes concern comparatively obscure sets of brothers (members of the Greek dynasties in Libya and in Cyprus),⁵ the third concerns the tyrant Polycrates (3.39), who enjoys particular prominence in the *Histories* as a whole. Polycrates, moreover, is the only Greek mentioned in the *Histories* whose behavior toward his brothers changes from peaceful accord to violent discord. Polycrates' story serves as a counter-example to the pattern discernible in the longer accounts of Greek fraternal harmony and non-Greek fraternal violence. His treatment of his brothers helps to delineate his character. The moral example that his story as a whole provides for a Greek—and, even more specifically, an Athenian—audience in Herodotus' own day incorporates an implicit warning against the dangers of fraternal discord.

Although composed in prose rather than in verse, Herodotus' narrative often tends toward the didacticism characteristic of Greek poetry.⁶ He regularly uses patterning and repetition to structure his narrative and to emphasize exceptions which he finds significant.⁷ His stories of brothers exemplify this procedure. In his lengthy stories involving fraternal protagonists, Greek brothers consistently demonstrate personal loyalty and political fidelity (or, at least, laudable self-restraint and, certainly, non-violence) toward their brothers. In contrast, in the lengthy stories concerning non-Greek brothers, Herodotus invariably describes violence, competition, jealousy, cruelty, and even fratricide. The *Histories* lacks any lengthy tale emphasizing Greek fraternal violence or non-Greek fraternal harmony, even though it includes undetailed, unemphatic examples of such behavior (particularly in non-Greek fraternal relationships). The presence of a clear distinction in the longer accounts and comparative ambiguity in the unelaborated examples suggests that in presenting fraternal relationships, Herodotus does not objectively describe actual Greek and non-Greek attitudes or practices. Instead, he expands selectively and with moralizing intent. The emphasis, in the longer tales, on Greek fraternal harmony and non-Greek fraternal violence appears calculated and didactic.

Herodotus' lengthy stories of Greek brothers emphasize, above all, loyalty and cooperation. Cleobis and Biton, the first siblings

⁴ Herodotus mentions, without elaboration, twelve examples of implicit, non-Greek fraternal accord: Cheops and Chephren (2.127), Darius and Artaphrenes (5.25, 30–31), Xerxes and Achaemenes (7.7), brothers of Xerxes (7.64; 7.68; 7.69; 7.72; 7.78; 7.82; 7.97; 7.224–225), Xerxes and Ariabignes (8.89).

⁵ Sons of Battus (4.160); Onesilus and Gorgus (5.104).

⁶ K. H. Waters, *Herodotus the Historian* (Norman, Okla., 1985) 8.

⁷ H. Immerwahr, *Form and Thought in Herodotus* (Cleveland 1966) 176–77. See also T. Long, *Repetition and Variation in the Short Stories of Herodotus* (Frankfurt 1987) 2–4, and D. Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (Toronto 1989) 165–66.

mentioned in the *Histories*, seem to set the standard for subsequent sibling stories. Considering these brothers the second happiest men in the world, Solon describes how they acted quite literally as yoke mates, harnessing themselves together like oxen and pulling a wagon to take their mother to the festival of Hera (1.31).

Not all Greek brothers in the *Histories* achieve this standard of unity, but other stories demonstrate Greek fraternal harmony and solidarity, particularly in the political context, that is, concerning the distribution of sovereignty and citizenship. For example, three Argive brothers, descendants of Temenus and banished from Argos into Illyria, receive supernatural portents, utilize the cunning of the youngest brother (Perdiccas, founder of the Macedonian monarchy), and act jointly to subdue Macedonia (8.137–139). Told at some length, the story of these three brothers contains no suggestion of discord or resentment. Similarly, following the death of Pisistratus in Athens, the tyrant's son, Hippias, holds power, apparently without objection from his brother Hipparchus (5.55–56), and when Hipparchus is murdered, Hippias becomes “embittered against the Athenians” (ἐμπικραϊνομένου, 5.62).⁸ Indeed, fraternal strife is conspicuously lacking in Herodotus' otherwise negative portrayal of this family.

Herodotus' stories also suggest that, for Greeks, the fraternal bond translates readily into a political connection, since Greeks even demand power for their brothers when it is offered to themselves. Tisamenus, an Elean, demands Spartan citizenship for himself in return for acceding to the Spartans' request that he join with their kings in leading them in war. When the Spartans finally agree, Tisamenus insists that his brother Hegias receive Spartiate status as well (9.33). Moreover, according to Herodotus, Tisamenus' demands imitate those of Melampus of Pylos, who, hired by the Argives to cure their women of a mental illness, demands half of the Argive kingship in payment. When the Argives finally acquiesce, Melampus increases his demand to include one-third of the kingship for his brother Bias (9.34).

Even when unwilling to share political power, Greek brothers do not resort to fratricide. Herodotus repeatedly details Spartan siblings' observance of self-restraint and due process in regard to royal succession. Following the death of the Spartan king Anaxandrides, his son Dorieus, although angry at the succession of his elder brother Cleomenes, chooses to leave Sparta to found a new colony rather than be ruled by his brother (5.42). Subsequently, at the deaths of Cleomenes and Dorieus, the kingship falls to Anaxandrides' third son, Leonidas. Herodotus carefully explains that this is because Cleomenes had no sons, and Leonidas (who had married Cleomenes' daughter) is older than Cleombrotus, Anaxandrides' youngest son (7.204–205). Admittedly, these Spartan brothers demonstrate something

⁸ All textual citations are from the Oxford Classical Text, *Herodoti Historiae*, ed. C. Hude (Oxford 1927).

less than complete fraternal accord, but Herodotus takes pains to emphasize the peaceful, legal, orderly quality of Spartan succession and the Spartans' adherence to law or precedent.

In fact, Spartan concern for observance of due process leads to the development of the unusual institution of dual kingship. Unable to determine which is the elder of the twin sons of king Aristodemus, the Spartans act on the Pythia's advice and establish both as kings (6.51–52).⁹ The system does not preclude fraternal discord, for *τούτους ἀνδρωθέντας αὐτούς τε ἀδελφεοὺς ἔοντας λέγουσι διαφόρους εἶναι τὸν πάντα χρόνον τῆς ζῆς ἀλλήλοισι, καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τούτων γενομένους ὡσαύτως διατελέειν* (6.52.8).¹⁰ But the story illustrates the Spartans' ability to address the political problem of fraternal discord by creating the dual kingship and thereby preempting potential violence.

Whereas Herodotus' extended stories of Greek brothers emphasize personal and political cooperation or prudent self-restraint, his lengthy stories of non-Greek brothers stress political competition and the use of force, rather than due process, in disputes over sovereignty. The brother of the Egyptian King Sesostris, for example, tries to kill the king and his family. Most of the family escapes (2.107) and Sesostris eventually returns, *τεισάμενος τὸν ἀδελφεὸν* ("taking vengeance on his brother," 2.108). In another instance, the Persian ruler Cambyses first exiles his brother, then kills him (3.30) and, subsequently, his sister (3.31). Moreover, unlike the Spartans, the Persians have no regulations providing for orderly succession. Of Darius' sons, Herodotus notes that *ἔόντες δὲ μητρὸς οὐ τῆς αὐτῆς ἐστασίαζον* ("as they were not of the same mother, they were at odds with one another," 7.2.2). Presumably, if all seven had the same mother, there would be no difficulty discerning the heir. Acting on the advice of the Spartan exile, Demaratus, who explains that in Sparta, a later-born son could become king if the father had not been king when the older son was born (7.3.3), Xerxes persuades Darius to make him king. And yet, Herodotus undercuts any apparent parallel with Spartan legal practice by insisting that the result is a consequence of power relationships and not legal process, since *δοκέειν δὲ μοι, καὶ ἄνευ ταύτης τῆς ὑποθήκης ἐβασίλευσε ἂν Ξέρξης. ἡ γὰρ Ἀτοσσα εἶχε τὸ πᾶν κράτος* ("but I myself believe that, even without the advice, Xerxes would have become King. For Atossa had all the power," 7.3.4). Xerxes' accession, in this view, derives from acknowledgment of his mother's power rather than observance of legal precedents regarding birth order. The comment belies any suggestion that Xerxes' accession is a mutually accept-

⁹ Herodotus previously mentions the dual kingship of Aristodemus' sons Eurysthenes and Procles at 4.147.

¹⁰ "These children, grown to manhood, brothers though they were, were, they say, continually at variance with one another all their lives, and so it has continued with all their descendants." All translations of Herodotus are from D. Grene, *Herodotus: The History* (Chicago 1987).

able arrangement or in any way a political compromise. The analogy with Spartan rules of succession only emphasizes Xerxes' distance from Spartan practice.

Herodotus' stories of non-Greek brothers also include additional instances of nonviolent disagreement. Darius' brother Artabanus tries unsuccessfully to persuade Darius to stop his campaign against the Scythians (4.83; 7.10). While Achaemenes persuades his brother Xerxes to reject Demaratus' advice to divide the army, Xerxes refuses to accept Achaemenes' view of Demaratus and reproaches him for his suspicions (7.236–237).

Although disagreement, violent or nonviolent, characterizes the longer tales of non-Greek brothers, two prominent stories appear at first to violate this pattern of fraternal discord among non-Greeks. But in both of these episodes the fraternal relationships and their consequences differ markedly from the harmonious, or even at times grudging, fraternal cooperation manifested in the *logoi* featuring Greek brothers. The first of these stories concerns two Egyptian brothers, whose fraternal cooperation takes a macabre turn. Trapped in the act of robbing King Rhampsinitus' treasure chamber and unable to escape, a thief sacrifices himself in order to save his brother. But this self-sacrifice takes the form of urging his brother to save himself by killing him. The trapped brother compels the other to cut off his head so that his identity, and therefore his brother's, will remain secret (2.121). Thus, one non-Greek brother demonstrates fraternal loyalty by requesting, and the other by performing, fratricide.

Just as the Egyptian brothers' relationship perverts the concept of fraternal loyalty, Herodotus' story of the two Magian brothers reveals the destructive consequences of non-Greek fraternal accord. Although describing in considerable detail the Magian conspiracy against the Persian ruler Cambyses (3.61–79), Herodotus never explores the brothers' relationship with each other, never stresses the element of fraternal accord. Moreover, these two brothers together attempt to usurp power (and both die as a consequence). Their story contrasts sharply, therefore, with the lengthy accounts of Greek fraternal affinity, power-sharing, or nonviolent succession.

Consistently delineated in the longer stories involving fraternal protagonists, the distinction between Greek fraternal harmony and non-Greek fraternal discord reflects Herodotus' use of ethnology throughout his work. The question of the historian's objectivity or lack of it remains far from uncontroversial,¹¹ and the precise function of ethnographic distinctions in the *Histories* has received much attention but remains problematic as well. Some scholars argue that Herodotus uses ethnography as a means of moral evaluation and as a way of explaining Greek successes, that his stories regularly

¹¹ For a discussion of "Herodotean prejudices" and the scholarly debate, see Waters (above, n.6) 119–35.

distinguish Greek from barbarian qualities, and that his accounts of non-Greeks provide counter-examples for his judgement and evaluation of Greek practices.¹² But Herodotus' ethnographic categories are far from rigid or impermeable¹³ and not readily disentangled from geographical distinctions, which prove just as problematic as ethnographical categories.¹⁴

Despite significant fluidity between the categories, the opposition between Greek and barbarian seems to provide a frame of reference for Herodotus' account, but, as François Hartog has observed, the inhabitants of Scythia provide a standard distinct both from Greeks and from other non-Greeks.¹⁵ In stories featuring Scythian fraternal relationships, Herodotus preserves this distinction or "otherness" of the Scythians, in that the Scythians display both types of fraternal relationships visible in the longer stories of Greeks and non-Greeks.

In one story, Scythian brothers demonstrate the fraternal accord characteristic of Greek brothers in Herodotus' lengthy accounts. The Scythians' account of their own origins includes fraternal harmony comparable to that found in the stories of Greek brothers. The two older sons of the Scythian Targiteus decide, because of signs, to give over the rule of Scythia to their younger brother (4.5). The story parallels Herodotus' account, mentioned above, of the Argive brothers, the Temenidae, and their subjugation of Macedonia (8.137–139). Whereas the Temenidae share power equally, the sons of the Scythian Targiteus, behaving somewhat like Spartan kings, acquiesce without violence to the rule of one brother, in this case, the youngest.¹⁶

¹² Lateiner (above, n.7) 147–57. H. Fränkel (*Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums* [Munich 1962] 603–5) discusses the importance of polarity in early Greek thought. See also J. Redfield, "Herodotus the Tourist," *CP* 80 (1985) 97–118.

¹³ See C. B. R. Pelling, "East is East and West is West—or Are They? National Stereotypes in Herodotus," *Histos* 1 (1997) (available on-line at www.dur.ac.uk/Classics/histos/1997/pelling.html). Pelling points out that by beginning with Croesus, arguably a liminal figure, Herodotus signals that the categories "are problematic from the start" (4), although they are neither nonexistent nor irrelevant. Ultimately, in Pelling's view, the *Histories*, like Homer's *Iliad* and Aeschylus' *Persians*, has a universalizing effect, drawing attention to shared characteristics, rather than to oppositions between individuals and groups.

¹⁴ See J. Alty, "Dorians and Ionians," *JHS* 102 (1982) 1–14. Immerwahr (above, n.7) 317 and S. Pembroke ("Women in Charge: The Function of Alternatives in Early Greek Traditions and the Ancient Idea of Matriarchy," *JWI* 30 [1967] 29–30) consider Herodotus' interest in geography as a source of explanation for human behavior and historical events, while R. Thomas (*Herodotus in Context* [Cambridge and New York, 2000] 79) questions the tidiness of the categories and notes Herodotus' sensitivity to their permeability.

¹⁵ Lateiner (above, n.7) 155 and 157. F. Hartog (*The Mirror of Herodotus: Representations of the Other in the Writing of History*, tr. J. Lloyd [Berkeley 1988] 8) explains the Scythians as a model of "otherness" for the Greek world, claiming that "we may read the text with the assumption that this or that Scythian practice may be interpreted in relation to its homologue in the Greek world."

¹⁶ Herodotus appears to distance himself from the Scythians' account of their own origins by providing two alternative versions: the Greek tale of the youngest of

In the two other stories involving Scythian fraternal protagonists, however, Scythian brothers display the violent fraternal competition characteristic of non-Greeks in Herodotus' long tales. In one episode, the Scythian Saulius kills his brother Anacharsis for adopting foreign customs (4.76). In a second tale, the ruler of Scythia, Scyles, flees into Thrace when his people rebel at his introduction of Dionysiac worship into Scythia, and his brother, Octamasades, takes over the sovereignty. Then Octamasades and the Thracian Sitalces subsequently each return the other's fugitive brother, and the Scythian kills his brother immediately upon receiving him (whereas the Thracian king takes his away, and his fate goes unreported) (4.79-80).

While the Scythian stories include both types of fraternal behavior, many of the short, undetailed references to brothers reinforce the distinction, evident in the longer stories, between Greek fraternal cooperation and non-Greek fraternal discord. As in the extended stories, most of the Greek brothers in the short, undetailed accounts act in concert and display fraternal cooperation: when the Milesians attack Sardis, Aristagoras of Miletus appoints his brother Charopinus general (5.99). In Sicily, on the death of Cleandrus, his brother Hippocrates succeeds to the throne of Gela (7.154), and, later, Gelon, having also acquired Syracuse, gives the rule of Gela to his brother Hiero (7.156).

And, as in the longer stories, the shorter references also include examples of non-Greek fraternal disagreement. Conjecturing about Hector and Paris, Herodotus maintains that if Helen had been in Troy during the war, the Trojans would have restored her to the Greeks, for, among other reasons, Hector would not have acquiesced in his brother's misdeed (2.120). The shorter references also provide two additional instances of non-Greek brothers quarreling over sovereignty. Pantaleon, half-brother of the Lydian Croesus, opposes his brother and conspires to become king in his stead (1.92). And Sarpedon and Minos, the sons of Europa, contend for the Cretan throne (1.173). Emphasizing that such contention is characteristically non-Greek, Herodotus pointedly notes that *τὴν γὰρ Κρήτην εἶχον τὸ παλαιὸν πᾶσαν βάρβαροι* ("all of Crete in those days was possessed by barbarians," 1.173).¹⁷

And yet, while most of the short, undetailed references to brothers conform to the distinction discernible in the longer stories, the pattern presented in the longer stories seems the result of deliberate

three sons of Heracles who became sovereign by stringing Heracles' bow (4.8-10), and the rationalizing account that Herodotus prefers (with no brothers involved) (4.11). Both the Scythian and the Greek accounts contain distinct fairy-tale elements, including the presence of divine signs, the motif of three brothers (as also in the Macedonian origin story featuring the three Temenidae at 8.137-139), and the preeminence of the youngest son. For examples of these motifs in folktales, see S. Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* (Bloomington, Ind., 1955) 3:420 and 484; and 4:163 and 491-92.

¹⁷ One case of inadvertent fratricide occurs at 1.35, when the Phrygian Adrastus kills his brother *ἀέκων* ("unwittingly").

selection, since one can infer more positive fraternal relationships among non-Greeks from several brief, unemphatic examples, and three references indicate fraternal violence among Greeks. Herodotus mentions, but does not elaborate upon, several instances of non-Greek fraternal accord: Chephren takes over the kingship of Egypt at the death of Cheops, his brother (2.127). Darius appoints his brother Artaphrenes viceroy of Sardis (5.25, 30, 31). Similarly, Xerxes appoints his brother Achaemenes satrap of Egypt (7.7), and Achaemenes later serves as admiral of the fleet (7.236). So, too, although unable to dissuade Darius from attacking Scythia, Artabanus subsequently serves with him on the campaign (7.18). Furthermore, a number of Darius' brothers lead divisions of the Persian army (7.61–99), two of Xerxes' brothers fall at Thermopylae (7.224–225), and another brother, the general Ariabignes, dies in the battle of Salamis (8.89).

While these examples imply non-Greek fraternal cooperation comparable to the cooperation displayed by Greek brothers in the long and most of the short tales, three equally brief references disclose episodes of Greek fraternal discord comparable to the non-Greek discord evident in the long stories and many of the short. Violent, political competition, characteristic of the extended *logoi* concerning non-Greek fraternal relationships, occurs in two brief references to the Greek royal dynasties in Libya and in Cyprus: in Libya, the sons of Battus fight each other for political sovereignty, and Arcesilaus is strangled by his own brother, Haliarchus (4.160);¹⁸ in Cyprus, Onesilus conspires against his brother Gorgus, king of Salamis, and forces Gorgus to flee to the Medes (5.104).

Violent, political competition also occurs in Herodotus' account of the tyrant Polycrates and his brothers. According to Herodotus, Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, first gave two-thirds of his state to his two brothers (i.e., he divided the state equally), but subsequently killed one brother and banished the other: *καὶ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα τριχῇ δασάμενος τὴν πόλιν τοῖσι ἀδελφεοῖσι Πανταγνώτῳ καὶ Συλοσῶντι ἔνειμε, μετὰ δὲ τὸν μὲν αὐτῶν ἀποκτείνας, τὸν δὲ νεώτερον Συλοσῶντα ἐξελάσας ἔσχε πᾶσαν Σάμον* ("first of all he divided the state into three parts and gave two to his brothers Pantagnotus and Syloson; but afterwards he killed one of them and banished the younger, Syloson, and so took all Samos for himself," 3.39). Like the reference to fraternal violence in the Greek royal dynasties of Libya and Cyprus, Polycrates' violence toward his brothers violates the pattern of Greek fraternal accord evident in the longer stories.

¹⁸ This fraternal violence appears to usher in a series of Battiadae atrocities: Arcesilaus, grandson of the murdered Arcesilaus, ignores a Delphic oracle and burns alive a number of Cyrenaeans before himself being murdered in Barca (4.164). His mother, Pheretima, with Persian aid, besieges Barca and impales and mutilates a number of Barcaeans in revenge for her son's murder (4.202). In Pheretima's own gruesome death, producing worms from her own body, Herodotus finds evidence of the gods' enmity toward such acts of revenge (4.205).

While Herodotus elaborates on none of these three instances of Greek fraternal discord, the Greek brothers in Libya and in Cyprus do not figure as significantly in the *Histories* as a whole as Polycrates does. And yet, despite Polycrates' prominence, Herodotus supplies no description and no details in his account of Polycrates' relationship with his brothers. Most remarkably, Herodotus offers no explanation for the dramatic reversal in the fraternal relationship. The change from initial accord to violent discord is, with one exception, unparalleled in fraternal relationships mentioned in the *Histories* and entirely unparalleled in Greek fraternal relationships.

The one exception is Herodotus' detailed and gory account of the Persian ruler Xerxes' treatment of his brother Masistes. Xerxes' initial affection and loyalty to his brother turns subsequently to violence and murder. Xerxes rewards Xenagoras for saving Masistes' life (9.107), but his brotherly love has its limits: the fraternal connection prevents Xerxes from forcibly taking his brother's wife for himself, but not from arranging for his own son to marry Masistes' daughter and then taking her for himself (9.108). When Xerxes' wife blames Masistes' wife for Xerxes' affair with Masistes' daughter, Xerxes reluctantly delivers Masistes' wife to his own wife's vengeance, after failing to persuade Masistes to give his wife up voluntarily (9.110–111). In the end, Xerxes sends an army to kill his brother (9.113).

While the reversal in the fraternal relationship characterizes Xerxes as a typical eastern potentate,¹⁹ Polycrates' reversal in his treatment of his brothers makes him unique among Greeks described in the *Histories*. And unlike the story of Xerxes and Masistes, Herodotus' account of Polycrates and his brothers is cryptic. Arguably, Herodotus avoids expansion or omits details because the story does not substantiate the pattern of Greek fraternal accord that he chooses to emphasize in extended *logoi*. Unexplained or fickle behavior may even have been a proverbial characteristic of Polycrates (as, perhaps, of tyrants in general). Diodorus, for example, relates that Polycrates first received some Lydian suppliants kindly, then put them to the sword and took all of their possessions (10.16.4). Expansion may also be unnecessary for Herodotus because the spare description functions as a kind of code or shorthand, as if Herodotus were saying: "First Polycrates behaved like a Greek, and then he behaved like a barbarian." In the story of Xerxes and

¹⁹ For consideration of the story's emphasis on Xerxes' depravity as an eastern tyrant and for discussion of the parallels between the story of Xerxes and Masistes' wife and the story of Gyges in book 1, see E. Wolff, "Das Weib des Masistes," *Hermes* 92 (1964) 51–58, Lateiner (above, n.7) 141–45, Pelling (above, n.13), J. L. Moles, "Herodotus Warns the Athenians," *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar*, vol. 9 (1996) 272, and C. Dewald, "Wanton Kings, Pickled Heroes, and Gnostic Founding Fathers: Strategies of Meaning at the End of Herodotus' *Histories*," in D. H. Roberts, F. M. Dunn, and D. Fowler, eds., *Classical Closure: Reading the End in Greek and Latin Literature* (Princeton 1997) 66–69.

Masistes, Herodotus emphasizes the fragility of barbarian fraternal affinity and how readily it can succumb to greed, envy, and violence. Accordingly, Xerxes' example reveals that even in his change in treatment of his brothers, Polycrates acts like a barbarian.²⁰

Polycrates' fortunes, moreover, exemplify a tragic pattern in the *Histories*: a great and prosperous autocrat incurs the envy of the gods and is destroyed, ultimately, by greed and blindness.²¹ As *πρῶτος τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν Ἑλλήνων ὃς θαλασσοκρατεῖν ἐπενοήθη* ("the first of the Greeks we know to lay plans for mastery of the sea") and distinct from earlier, mythological thalassocrats (3.122),²² Polycrates amply displays the qualities of a doomed autocrat. In the end, immense wealth and power lead only to his destruction, just as they do for Croesus and Xerxes. And yet, unlike Croesus

²⁰ Cambyses' treatment of his sisters provides a comparable analogy. Marrying two of his full sisters and subsequently killing one, who also happens to be pregnant at the time, Cambyses demonstrates the autocrat's ability to contravene custom and morality and to manipulate law. (See M. Brosius, *Women in Ancient Persia 559–531 B.C.* [Oxford 1996] 45–47.)

While Herodotus' expanded stories of non-Greek brothers stress their failure to demonstrate loyalty and affection in their fraternal relationships or the dire consequences of non-Greek fraternal accord (as in the stories of the Egyptian and Magian brothers), his stories of non-Greek sisters regularly emphasize their devotion to their brothers. The Egyptian Queen Nitocris (2.100), Cambyses' sister (3.32), Intaphrenes' wife (3.119), and Darius' sister (4.43) appear to understand the sibling bond very much as Sophocles' Antigone does when, in burying her dead brother, she echoes the motives of the wife of Intaphrenes for preserving her live brother (*Ant.* 960–978). Brosius rejects the inference that royal and noble Persian women acted out of unscrupulous self-interest. She argues that, within a tightly circumscribed sphere of influence, they sought, rather, to preserve their families (105–22). Interestingly, Herodotus provides no comparable stories of Greek sisters demonstrating fidelity and attachment to their brothers or urging their brothers to show fraternal loyalty. In two instances, however, Greek brothers *use* their sisters in order to gain their own ends (5.13 and 5.21), and, once, a father uses his daughter to persuade her brother (3.53).

Arguments from silence are inevitably weak, but speculation is tempting. The stories of non-Greek sisters suggest that non-Greek fraternal hostility defies sororal remonstrance. Non-Greek brothers choose to ignore their sisters' reminders of the value of fraternal harmony. Herodotus' emphasis on fraternal accord in the stories about Greek brothers and the absence of stories of Greek brothers ignoring sisterly advice imply that Greek brothers, unlike barbarians, naturally cooperate and need no such sisterly reminders of fraternal obligation.

Moreover, Athenian women (unlike certain non-Greek women) had only a limited legal and political role. (See, for example, P. B. Manville, *The Origins of Citizenship in Ancient Athens* [Princeton 1990] 12–13, and C. A. Cox, "Sisters, Daughters, and the Deme of Marriage," *JHS* 108 [1988] 185–88.) If Herodotus' interest in the sibling stories rests on the political value of the fraternal bond, Greek sisters' attitudes and actions may simply have seemed irrelevant to the historian and his contemporary Greek audience.

²¹ J. A. S. Evans, *Herodotus, Explorer of the Past* (Princeton 1991) 71–73. See also V. J. Gray, "Herodotus and Images of Tyranny: The Tyrants of Corinth," *AJPh* 117.3 (1996) 361–389.

²² See E. Vandiver, *Heroes in Herodotus: The Interaction of Myth and History* (Frankfurt, Bern, New York, and Paris, 1991) 55 and 144–46. See also Lateiner (above, n.7) 118.

and Xerxes, when Polycrates is warned that the gods begrudge human wealth and success, he appears to take the warning to heart. He tries to avert misfortune, however, by sacrificing only a single prized possession. The serendipitous return of his emerald signet ring (3.40–43) signifies his inability to prevent misfortune and reveals, arguably, the hollowness of his “sacrifice.”²³ Despite Polycrates’ apparent caution or humility in his reaction to the warning about divine envy, the story ultimately only underscores his similarity to the non-Greek autocrats Croesus and Xerxes.²⁴

Recounting Polycrates’ ultimate fate, Herodotus further emphasizes the relationship between prosperity and destruction. He describes Polycrates’ greed (3.123) and his refusal to heed a warning oracle and dream (3.124). Unable to establish definitively the proximate cause of the tyrant’s death, the historian offers two opposing stories. In one, Mitrobates, governor of the province at Dascyleium, reproaches Oroetes, satrap of Sardis, for failing to acquire Samos for the king of Persia. Oroetes, in consequence, becomes furious and seeks vengeance, not upon Mitrobates for making the remark, but upon Polycrates for causing it to be said (3.120). In the alternative story, Polycrates incurs Oroetes’ anger by behaving rudely toward Oroetes’ herald, either intentionally, or inadvertently (3.121). Although the two explanations are morally opposed (either Polycrates’ own action precipitated his fate or it did not), Herodotus concludes only: *πάρεστι δὲ πείθεσθαι ὁκοτέρη τις βούλεται αὐτέων* (“you may believe which you prefer,” 3.122). The historian’s ready acknowledgment of his inability to determine the true explanation hints that the details of the denouement matter less than the overarching pattern.

As a morality tale, Polycrates’ story includes the unadorned statement of the tyrant’s treatment of his brothers. Polycrates’ violence toward his brothers contrasts with the Greek fraternal cooperation and parallels the non-Greek fraternal violence evident in Herodotus’ lengthy stories about brothers. Polycrates’ reversal from initial accord to violent dispute associates him unmistakably with fraternal behavior that Herodotus attributes to non-Greeks.

Throughout the *Histories*, Herodotus’ selective emphasis on Greek fraternal harmony appears to derive more from the impulses of the

²³ Lateiner (above, n.7) 194. See also A. W. Gomme, *The Greek Attitude to Poetry and History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1954) 81. For a discussion of cosmic vengeance and balance, see J. de Romilly, “La vengeance comme explication historique dans Herodote,” *REG* 84 (1971) 314–37. See also J. E. van der Veen, “The Lord of the Ring: Narrative Technique in Herodotus’ Story on Polycrates’ Ring,” *Mnemosyne* 46.4 (1993) 410–38.

²⁴ For Herodotus’ distinction between royal power and tyrannical power, see E. Lévy, “Basileus et Tyrannos chez Hérodote,” *Ktema* 18 (1993) 7–18. See also A. Ferrill, “Herodotus on Tyranny,” *Historia* 27 (1978) 385–98, and G. Crane, “The Prosperity of Tyrants: Bacchylides, Herodotus, and the Contest for Legitimacy,” *Arethusa* 29.1 (1996) 57–88.

moralist than those of the historian. Unquestionably, he shows far more interest in sibling relationships and kinship ties than does Thucydides,²⁵ but his stories of harmony among Greek brothers do not appear to mirror contemporary reality: fifth-century Athens, at least, provides all-too abundant evidence of fraternal quarrels, especially in regard to the inheritance of paternal wealth.²⁶ Brothers might stand together against opposition from outside the family, but often quarreled over inherited property.²⁷

But, as a moralist, Herodotus does not make a simplistic political division. In selecting specific stories for expansion, he does not, for example, underscore peaceful succession in democracies and bloody, violent succession in autocratic societies. As Arlene Saxonhouse argues, Herodotus reveals throughout his *Histories* a preference for political equality, in general, rather than for democracy, in particular, and this poses the problem of establishing legitimate sovereignty, of determining who should rule when all are equal.²⁸ Interactions between brothers regarding the distribution of political power and the inheritance of paternal sovereignty crystallize the political problem, for none are more equal, intrinsically and by birth, than brothers.

In the extended *logoi* concerning brothers, Herodotus repeatedly distinguishes Greek from non-Greek practice (presenting the Scythians as capable of both types of fraternal relationships) to suggest that fraternal harmony is a characteristically Greek quality. The lengthy stories emphasize that, among Greeks, the fraternal bond has translated readily into political harmony and accord, or, at the very least, nonviolent royal succession. With the exception of Polycrates, Herodotus shows no interest in evidence to the contrary. He elaborates none of the numerous brief references to non-Greek fraternal accord or either of the two other examples of Greek fraternal violence.

If Herodotus' narrative contained a message for his contemporaries,²⁹ his depiction of fraternal behavior in the *Histories* adopts

²⁵ Crane, *The Blinded Eye: Thucydides and the New Written Word* (Lanham, Md., 1996) 24.

²⁶ See, for example, C. A. Cox, *Household Interests: Property, Marriage Strategies and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens* (Princeton 1998) 109–14, and B. S. Strauss, *Fathers and Sons in Athens: Ideology and Society in the Era of the Peloponnesian War* (Princeton 1993) 68.

²⁷ Cox (above, n.26) 128.

²⁸ A. W. Saxonhouse, *Athenian Democracy: Modern Mythmakers and Ancient Theorists* (Notre Dame and London, 1996) 44 and 49.

²⁹ Increasingly, more recent scholarship interprets the *Histories* in the context of events and ideas of the third quarter of the fifth century and explores Herodotus' work as a warning to his contemporaries. See, for example, C. Fornara, *Herodotus: An Interpretive Essay* (Oxford 1971) 75–91; K. A. Raaflaub, "Herodotus, Political Thought, and the Meaning of History," in D. Boedeker, ed., *Herodotus and the Invention of History, Arethusa* 20.1–2 (1987) 221–48; G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore 1990), esp. 215–38 and 305–16; J. A. Arieti, *Discourses*

the paradigmatic role of traditional mythic narrative in offering a model for metaphorical panhellenic fraternity, since mythological tradition seems to assume a natural affinity between brothers. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus and Telemachos acknowledge that brothers may be expected to provide support in the case of a quarrel (*Od.* 16.97–98 and 16.115–116). And although Herodotus and Thucydides provide ample evidence of animosity between Dorians and Ionians,³⁰ mythological genealogies encouraged or reflected peaceful, mutually supportive relationships between ethnic groups by identifying eponymous ancestors as brothers.³¹ Tradition identified Doros, Aeolos, and Xouthos as sons of Hellen and Ion and Achaeos as sons of Xouthos, thereby creating a hierarchy between groups, with closer affinities between Dorians and Aeolians and between Ionians and Achaeans and placing Dorians and Aeolians closer to Hellen.³² This genealogy may well have been in place by the end of the sixth century when, arguably, Greek self-definition was “aggregative.” After the Persian Wars, as Greek self-definition became “oppositional,” the conception of a common descent from Hellen came into conflict with Athenian claims of autochthony.³³ Euripides’ *Ion* may reflect an effort to reconcile the two traditions while propagandistically elevating Ion over Doros and Achaeos.³⁴ The *Ion* may well be later than the *Histories*,³⁵ and the propagandistic impulse seems antithetical to Herodotus’ purposes, but Euripides displays the same understanding of mythical fraternity and its political uses: full brothers can be expected to have closer natural affinities than half brothers.

Herodotus’ stories about brothers suggest that he is unwilling to relinquish the earlier “aggregate” conception of Greek identity. The 440s and 430s undoubtedly offered ample evidence that an

on the *First Book of Herodotus* (Lanham, Md., 1995) 14, citing D. Grene, “Herodotus: The Historian as Dramatist,” *JPh* 58 (1961) 477–88, in dismissing the counterclaim of J. M. Alonso-Núñez in “Herodotus’ Ideas about World Empires,” *AncSoc* 19 (1988) 131; Moles (above, n.19) 259–84; C. Dewald (above, n.19), esp. 75 and n.29; and R. V. Munson, *Telling Wonders: Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work of Herodotus* (Ann Arbor 2001) 3–6 and nn.7–9 and nn.13–16.

³⁰ Alty (above, n.14) 4–7.

³¹ Hall (above, n.1) 48–52 and nn.133–134.

³² Hall (above, n.1) 41–44 and nn.76–77, citing Hesiod, fr. 9 and fr. 10(a).6–7, 20–24 Merkelbach/West.

³³ Hall (above, n.1) 44–48. Hall argues that this new “oppositional” definition of Greekness and the Athenians’ new leadership of the Delian League obviated the need to stress a common descent from Hellen (54).

³⁴ Hall (above, n.1) 56. In the play, Athene foretells the origin of the Ionians from Ion, the son of Creusa and Apollo, and of the Dorians and Achaeans from the sons of Creusa and her mortal husband Xouthos (*Ion* 1575–1593). Ion is thus descended from a god, not a mortal, and as Ion’s half brother, Doros is no longer Ion’s paternal uncle or closer in descent to Hellen. But compare Alty (above, n.14) 10, n.55, who argues that Euripides uses the story to promote “unity of purpose and goodwill between the Athenians and their subjects.”

³⁵ Hall (above, n.1) dates the *Ion* to the last decade of the fifth century (56).

“aggregate” self-definition could prove necessary to Greek survival. And, indeed, rejecting Mardonius’ offer of a deal with Persia, Herodotus’ Athenians emphasize, in the presence of Spartan envoys, τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν (their “common Greekness,” 8.144.2). They insist that ἐὼν ὁμαιμόν τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον, καὶ θεῶν ἰδρύματά τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἥθεα τε ὁμότροπα, τῶν προδότας γενέσθαι Ἀθηναίους οὐκ ἂν εὖ ἔχοι (“we are one in blood and one in language; those shrines of the gods belong to us all in common, and the sacrifices in common, and there are our habits, bred of a common upbringing. It would be indecent that the Athenians should prove traitors to all these,” 8.144.2). If ethnic identity is, in large part, a literary construction, Herodotus’ stories of brothers may participate in a traditional use of mythic narrative to create a “history” that inevitably shapes and directs the present and future.³⁶

Given the traditional assumption that affinity between brothers is somehow natural, whereas discord is aberrant, Polycrates’ relationship with his brothers adds precision to Herodotus’ warning about the perils of good fortune and the consequences of greed. Priding themselves on their naval supremacy and on their vast wealth and power, Athenians in the last third of the fifth century might well have seen themselves in Herodotus’ portrait of the ill-fated Polycrates. The tyrant’s initial fair treatment of his brothers and his subsequent (and, as Herodotus presents it, unmotivated) ill-treatment of them violates the pattern of Greek fraternal harmony visible in the extended accounts of brothers in the *Histories* and associates Polycrates with the fraternal behavior of an eastern tyrant. Undeniably, when they united to repel the Persians in 490 and 480 B.C.E., Greek individuals and city-states, led by Sparta and Athens, did display admirable political solidarity.³⁷ Herodotus’ reference to Polycrates’ mistreatment of his brothers might have alerted bellicose Greeks—and, particularly, Athenians—of the 430s and 420s to the wages of fraternal discord. By treating fellow citizens or citizens of other Greek states the way that barbarians in the *Histories* notoriously treat their brothers, Greeks did indeed risk squandering their paternal inheritance.

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³⁶ See Hall (above, n.1) 182–85.

³⁷ Despite interference from other Greeks fighting on the Persian side, Spartan and Athenian cooperation at Plataea, for example, illustrates the potential benefit of Greek cohesion. While they do not invoke any literal or even metaphorical kinship tie, the Athenians and Spartans display exemplary diplomacy and unity of purpose. They sensibly and tactfully acquiesce in the battle arrangements (9.46), and the Athenians readily (although unsuccessfully) attempt to assist the Spartans when Pausanias, under attack, requests their help (9.60).

Myth, Ritual, and Authorial Control in Herodotus' Story of Cleobis and Biton (Hist. 1.31)

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MYTH, RITUAL, AND AUTHORIAL CONTROL IN HERODOTUS' STORY OF CLEOBIS AND BITON (*HIST.* 1.31)

CHARLES C. CHIASSON



Abstract. I argue that Herodotus consciously and cunningly incorporates elements of myth and initiatory ritual into his story of Cleobis and Biton. The brothers' "blessed" death takes place in the context of an Argive initiatory festival, at the unintentional bidding of their mother, who thus embodies the link between maternity and mortality attested in early Greek hexameter poetry. The posthumous dedication by their fellow citizens of statues of the brothers at Delphi signifies both an honorary initiation into the class of adult male warriors and a mitigation of mortality (another fundamental concern of early Greek myth).

FOR ALL ITS BREVITY, the Herodotean story of Cleobis and Biton (*Hist.* 1.31) is a narrative of remarkable complexity that elaborates the possibly historical dedication¹ of votive statues in the brothers' honor at Delphi with elements drawn from myth and ritual. David Sansone has made the provocative argument that Herodotus presents Cleobis and Biton as

¹ It is widely believed that the statues mentioned by Herodotus are to be identified with the pair of marble statues excavated at Delphi by the French archaeologist Théophile Homolle in the last decade of the nineteenth century. These *kouroi* are dated to the early sixth century B.C.E. and bear a fragmentary inscription identifying the sculptor of one of the pieces as an Argive. This view has been challenged by Vatin 1982 and Faure 1985, both of whom discern reference to "the Wanakes" (the name by which the Dioscuri were worshipped at Argos) in the inscription and conclude that the statues are of Castor and Polydeuces, not Cleobis and Biton. Sansone (1991, 126) defends the traditional identification, considering it "virtually impossible" that there were two pairs of *kouroi* dedicated at Delphi by Argive citizens in the first half of the sixth century, and suggesting that the statues of the brothers were dedicated to the Dioscuri. Two recent discussions by art historians support the traditional identification by singling out extraordinary features of the statues not shared by other *kouroi*: Stewart (1990, 109) suggests that their boots may mark them as "farmers or travelers," while their muscular physiques (112) "remind one of the oxen whose places they took in Herodotus' story"; Spivey (1996, 109) also notes the slightly flexed elbows of the statues as possibly recalling the "tugging motion" required by their ordeal. Neither the identification nor indeed the historicity of these statues is essential to the argument of this paper.

athletes having on the one hand the character of sacrificial victims, and on the other a close connection with the divine twins, the Dioscuri—a paradoxical conjunction that Sansone takes to illustrate his theory that sport may be defined as “the ritual sacrifice of physical energy.”² In response to Professor Sansone’s interpretation, I will focus on mythical and ritual aspects of Herodotus’ account that manifest themselves more clearly in the surface structure of the story and on their broader implications for the nature of Herodotean historiography.³ These aspects include the mythical motif, widespread in early Greek hexameter poetry, of the mother who is responsible for the death (or at least the mortality) of her male offspring, and the ritual of adolescent initiation, reflected not only in the setting and overall structure of the narrative but also in details of its emplotment and vocabulary. The posthumous public recognition bestowed upon Cleobis and Biton by their fellow Argives affords them honorary admission into the class of adult male citizens. At the same time, the undying fame that results from their civic commemoration also effects a mediation between human mortality and divine immortality, polarities whose relationship is a constant concern of archaic Greek myth.⁴ I will argue that Herodotus incorporates such features of traditional story-telling and custom into his narrative with complete authorial awareness and control. He alerts his audience at the outset to the legendary nature of the story to follow and deploys its mythical and ritual elements to serve both the specific functions of the narrative within the Lydian *logos* and the broader purpose of Herodotean *historiē*—to perpetuate the communal memory of remarkable human deeds.

The Cleobis and Biton story is embedded in an elaborate context, as part of the Athenian sage Solon’s explanation why Croesus is not the most blessed (ὀλβιώτατος) man he has seen in all his travels despite his wealth and power as king of Lydia. Solon’s first choice as *olbiōtatos* is a fellow-citizen, Tellos of Athens, whose good fortune was inseparable from that of his *polis* and family, and culminated (as befits his name) in

² Sansone 1991, 125. Kurke (1993, 154–55) also emphasizes the importance of the brothers’ status as athletes, arguing that Herodotus’ narrative “replicates the conventions of athletic victory and its commemoration.”

³ I have profited from recent discussions of mythical and ritual patterns in the Herodotean stories of Periander and Lycophron (Sourvinou-Inwood 1991) and Euenius, the prophet of Apollonia (Griffiths 1999). See now also Boedeker 2002 for an enlightening general discussion of Herodotus’ interaction with epic and mythical traditions, including a sympathetic critique of Sourvinou-Inwood’s article.

⁴ Cf. Murnaghan 1992, 242, for early Greek hexameter poetry as “preoccupied with defining human life by exploring the line that separates men and gods.”

a glorious end—civic death in battle against the Eleusinians, acknowledged by the Athenians with a public burial. Although the historicity of Tellos can be neither proved nor disproved,⁵ there is nothing inherently unbelievable in Solon's summary of his life and death; the honor of burial on the battlefield where Tellos fell is paralleled by that of the Athenians who died fighting the Persians at Marathon in 490 (cf. Paus. 1.32.3) and the Greeks who fell at Plataea in 479 (cf. Hdt. 9.85). When a disappointed Croesus asks who is second most blessed in his guest's experience, however, Solon's introduction of Cleobis and Biton suggests that we are entering a different dimension of storytelling:

τούτοισι γὰρ εὐοῦσι γένος Ἀργείοισι βίος τε ἀρκέων ὑπὴν καὶ πρὸς τούτῳ
 ῥώμη σώματος τοιήδε· ἀθλοφόροι τε ἀμφοτέροι ὁμοίως ἦσαν, καὶ δὴ καὶ
 λέγεται ὅδε [ὁ] λόγος . . .

For Cleobis and Biton, who were of Argive descent, had a sufficient livelihood and in addition to this such physical strength as will now be demonstrated. Both alike were prize-winning athletes, of whom the following story in particular is told . . . (31.2)⁶

Alan Griffiths has observed that Herodotus typically indicates a shift in narrative mode from the historical to the mythical by means of various verbal cues, including phrases like “an incident of the following kind.”⁷ Here the cue identified by Griffiths (ῥώμη σώματος τοιήδε), alerting the audience to a “stranger” level of narrative where “less strict standards of verisimilitude apply,” is reinforced by the phrase λέγεται ὅδε [ὁ] λόγος, whose distancing function may be appreciated by contrast with the unmediated statement of fact concerning the brothers' prize-winning athleticism that precedes it.⁸ It should be noted that the procedure

⁵ Immerwahr (1966, 156–57, with n. 21) considers Tellos “rightly assumed to be a historical figure,” although his name may be a “hypocoristic variant” of a longer name, shortened for the sake of underscoring Solon's concern with the outcome (*telos*) of affairs.

⁶ I cite Herodotus from Hude's text (Oxford, 3d ed. 1927). All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

⁷ Griffiths 1999, 179. The only specific examples cited by Griffiths occur at 9.92.2 and 3.139.2; another noteworthy example is found at 3.50.1, when Herodotus first introduces Lycophron, the son of the Corinthian tyrant, in an episode whose “mythological” character has been otherwise demonstrated by Sourvinou-Inwood 1991.

⁸ Cf. Fowler 1996, 78, for Herodotus' use of λέγεται as implying “a certain distance in one's stance *vis-à-vis* the tradition, as if it is there to be tested.” See also Stahl 1975, 15, and Lateiner 1989, 22–23, for broader discussions of reported speech in the *Histories* as suggesting a lack of confidence in the truth of a tradition so rendered. (For a recent dissenting view, see Harrison 2000, 24–29.)

attributed by Griffiths to Herodotus as the primary narrator of the *Histories* is in this instance used by the secondary narrator Solon, a character who is partially assimilated to the primary narrator.⁹ Here, Gérard Genette's distinction between narration and focalization¹⁰ proves useful: while the words are spoken by Solon, it is through Herodotus' eyes that he discerns a fundamental historiographical distinction, finding it credible that the brothers were prize-winning athletes, but declining to vouch for the historical veracity of the story that follows. In the broader context of Solon's speech to Croesus, this subtly eloquent introduction separates the "mythological" story of Cleobis and Biton from the more historically plausible biography of the Athenian citizen Telloe that precedes it.

In his important discussion of the encounter between Solon and Croesus, Otto Regenbogen (1965, 383–89) argues that Herodotus learned the story of Cleobis and Biton at Delphi, where removed from its Argive origins it took on a distinctively Delphic coloring in its emphasis on the antinomy between divine power and human weakness. From the *Iliad* onward, Apollo is seen uniquely among the gods to embody and to protect from encroachment the distance that separates mortal from immortal status.¹¹ At Delphi, on the walls of Apollo's temple, this function of the god is reflected in such proverbial admonitions to mortal worshippers as *θηντὰ φρόνει* ("Think mortal thoughts") and *γνώθι σαυτὸν* ("Know yourself" [i.e., your mortal limitations]). Most noteworthy for our purposes is the story of Trophonius and Agamedes, the legendary builders of Apollo's first temple at Delphi, whose fate bears a striking similarity to that of Cleobis and Biton. According to Plutarch (*Moralia* 109a), Pindar

⁹ Solon resembles Herodotus' narrative persona in having traveled far and wide to seek out, and especially to see, superlative marvels among mankind (cf. Bloomer 1993, 31); for the similarity between Solon's admonition to Croesus to "consider the outcome" (32.9) and Herodotus' own historiographical method, see Lateiner 1989, 44, and Dewald 1997, 81. More generally, cf. Thomas 2000, 285, for Solon as one of the Herodotean wise advisers who "provides the narrator's long-term, distant and objective view of events." For an important difference between the Herodotean narrator and the Herodotean Solon, see n. 22 below.

¹⁰ Genette 1980, 185–210 (186 for the simple, central formulation distinguishing "the question *Who sees?* and the question *Who speaks?*"). de Jong 1987, 104, 108–9, observes a comparable practice in the *Iliad*, whereby the primary narrator-focalizer "adds elements of his own or intrudes upon embedded focalization." (At 3.191, during the Teichoscopia, Priam is said, "seeing Odysseus," to ask Helen to identify him; since Priam does not recognize Odysseus, it is the primary narrator-focalizer who inserts the hero's name for the benefit of the primary narratee-focalizee. In less technical but less precise terminology, Homer provides this information for the benefit of his audience.)

¹¹ For Apollo as the "God of Afar," see Burkert 1985, 148.

told how, after building the temple, Trophonius and Agamedes asked the god for their wages. Apollo promised to pay them on the seventh day and urged them to feast in the meantime. They did as the god instructed, and on the seventh night they lay down to sleep and died.¹² Cleobis and Biton undergo a similar experience after their mother prays that Argive Hera grant them the greatest benefit that a human can receive: the brothers offer sacrifice and feast, then lie down to sleep and die the gentle death that is a mark of the Hesiodic Golden Age.¹³ In both stories the god's surprising gift of death for human devotees underscores the shortcomings of mortal existence and knowledge, in contrast to divine immortality and understanding. Regenbogen traces the presence of this theme in the story of Cleobis and Biton—plausibly, in my view—to the influence of characteristically Delphic wisdom upon the narrative, once distanced from its original Argive setting.

An obvious difference between the two stories lies, however, in the crucial role played by the mother of Cleobis and Biton, identified by later sources (though not by Herodotus himself) as a priestess of Hera named Cydippe.¹⁴ In arguing for a connection between Cleobis and Biton and the myth of the Divine Twins, widespread in both Indo-European and world mythology, Sansone (1991, 129–30) identifies the mother as the female (typically a mother or sister) whom the twins must rescue and restore to her rightful place—the role played by Helen in the myth of the Dioscuri, to cite the best-known Greek example of the paradigm. Without denying the interest of this comparison, I would like to suggest that another relevant and culturally potent mythical motif lies closer to hand in the paradoxical tendency of early Greek hexameter poetry to associate mothers, the source of human life, with the death of their male offspring, as demonstrated by Sheila Murnaghan. Prominent Homeric examples include both Hector and Achilles in the *Iliad*. Early in Book 24 of the *Iliad*, Hera tells Apollo that Achilles' honor should not be equated with Hector's because Hector is a mortal who nursed at his mother's breast:

¹² For the Pindaric passage and its explication by Plutarch, see conveniently Race 1997 vol. ii, 225.

¹³ Cf. Hes. *Op.* 116, with West's (1978) note, for the death of the Golden Age men ὥσθ' ὑπὸν δεδμημένοι, "as if overwhelmed by sleep." Aly 1921, 37, notes its relevance to the deaths of Cleobis and Biton.

¹⁴ She is identified as a priestess by Plut. *Moralia* 108 E, Lucian *Charon* 10, Cic. *Tusc.* I 47, 113; named as well in a fragment (no. 133 in Sandbach 1969) of Plutarch's ὅτι καὶ γυναῖκα παιδεύτεον (*A Woman Should Also Be Educated*).

Ἑκτωρ μὲν θνητός τε γυναικά τε θήσατο μάζον·
 αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς ἐστι θεᾶς γόνος, ἣν ἐγὼ αὐτῇ
 θρέψα τε καὶ ἀτίτηλα καὶ ἀνδρὶ πόρον παράκοιτιν,
 Πηλεΐ, ὅς περὶ κῆρι φίλος γένετ' ἀθανάτοισι. (24.58–61)

Hector is a mortal, and suckled at a woman's breast,
 While Achilles is the offspring of a goddess, whom I myself
 Nurtured and cared for and gave as wife to a man,
 Peleus, who was dear above all to the heart of the immortals.

As Murnaghan (1992, 245) comments, “Hector’s mortal heritage is identified specifically with his nursing at his mother’s breast, as if he had taken in mortality itself along with his mother’s milk.” This identification is also implicit (and for the audience, implicitly ominous) in the earlier scene (22.79–89) in which Hecuba bares her breasts in a dramatic attempt to dissuade her son from facing Achilles alone on the plain outside the walls of Troy. Moreover, despite the contrast drawn in both of these scenes between Hector as the son of a mortal mother and Achilles as the son of an immortal goddess, Thetis for her part—for all her divinity—is consistently and pointedly associated in the *Iliad* with her son’s imminent death. In other words, as Murnaghan (1992, 252) notes, Thetis’ maternity outweighs her divinity in a telling illustration of the disproportionate linking of mortality with the mother in the Greek hexameter tradition.

The closest, most suggestive hexameter parallel to the treatment of maternity and mortality in Herodotus’ story occurs not in Homeric epic but in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* (lines 231–74). In that poem, the goddess’ surreptitious attempt to immortalize the Eleusinian prince Demophoön by holding him in the fire of the royal hearth is unwittingly thwarted by the prince’s mother Metanira, who believes that she is saving her son from being burned alive. The goddess angrily throws the child to the ground and announces that instead of the literal immortality she would have given him otherwise, she will grant him undying honor (ἄφθιτον . . . τιμὴν, 261, cf. 263), apparently manifested in ritual warfare conducted by the Eleusinians in Demophoön’s name ever after.¹⁵ In fact the similarities to Herodotus’ story run deeper than this bare summary would suggest for two reasons. First, diction used to describe the incident in the *Hymn* makes implicit reference to an alternate version of the

¹⁵ For details of the ceremony known as Βαλλητής, see the commentary on lines 265–67 by Richardson 1974, Cassola 1975 (with bibliography). Nagy 1999, 181–82, argues that the phrase ἄφθιτον τιμὴν in this context designates hero cult specifically.

story, preserved by Apollodorus (1.5.1), according to which Demophoön dies in the hearth fire as a result of Metanira's intervention. By means of this technique, the poet acknowledges the tradition whereby, as in the story of Cleobis and Biton, Metanira becomes the immediate cause of her son's death, not merely of his mortality.¹⁶ Consequently, Metanira's grief at the sight of the prince's ordeal by fire is described with several terms associated with lament for the dead in Homeric poetry, and is given visual expression by a gesture, the slapping of her thighs, that portends imminent death.¹⁷ For his part, Demophoön, when placed on the ground by the angry goddess in reestablishment of his earthbound mortality, is described as "gasping" (ἀσπαίροντα, 289), a word used exclusively in Homeric epic to describe the death throes of warriors.¹⁸

A second point of contact with Herodotus' story concerns the emphasis placed by Demeter, in her angry rebuke of Metanira, on the discrepancy between divine knowledge and human ignorance. After the queen has interrupted and thwarted her attempt to immortalize Demophoön, Demeter lashes out at Metanira as a paradigm of human folly:

Νήιδες ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἀφράδμονες οὐτ' ἀγαθοῖο
αἶσαν ἐπερχομένον προγνώμεναι οὔτε κακοῖο·
καὶ σὺ γὰρ ἀφραδίῃσι τεῆς μήκιστον ἀάσθης.
ἴστω γὰρ θεῶν ὕρκος ἀμείλικτον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ
ἀθάνατόν κέν τοι καὶ ἀγήραον ἥματα πάντα
παῖδα φίλον ποίησα καὶ ἄφθιτον ὥπασα τιμήν·
νῦν δ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὥς κεν θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξαι. (256–62)

Mortals are foolish and incapable of foreseeing fated good
Or evil as it advances upon them,
And you too have been greatly harmed as a result of your folly.

¹⁶ For this method as typical of Homeric poetry, cf. the argument of Slatkin 1991, 4, that "a particular version of a myth is part of a larger whole that invites shaping, focusing, and integrating within a narrative structure, but that, however partially represented, can be invoked in all its dimensions."

¹⁷ Rubin and Deal (1980, 12 n. 16) cite κώκυσεν ("she shrieked," 245), comparing Thetis' shriek for the death of Patroclus at *Iliad* 16.37, and γόον καὶ κήδεα λυγρά ("lament and grievous cares"), cf. 5.156; Murnaghan 1992, 246, adds the participles ὀλοφυρομένη ("grieving," 247) and ὀδυρομένη ("lamenting," 250). In addition, in this context Metanira's complaint that Demeter is "concealing" (κρύπτει, 249) Demophoön in the fire may also be understood to refer to burial (cf. LSJ s.v. I.2) or cremation (so Foley 1994, 50, commentary on line 239). For the queen's slapping of her thighs as a sign of death, see Lowenstam 1981, 56–60.

¹⁸ So Clay 1989, 243, confirmed by Foley 1994, 51 (commentary on line 253).

For let the gods' oath, the implacable water of Styx, be witness:
 Immortal and ageless for all his days
 I would have made your dear son, and would have given him undying
 honor;
 But as it is there is no way for him to escape death and the spirits of
 doom.

Now Demeter's anger at Metanira is predicated on the view, demonstrably shared by both of them, that death is a bad thing for human beings. But is this truism true in the context of our Herodotean narrative? As we have seen, the framework within which Solon tells the story is his ranking, at Croesus' request, of the most blessed men he has ever seen—a distinction that in Solon's judgment depends above all on the manner of one's death. In the context of their recognition as the second most prosperous men known to Solon, therefore, the mother of Cleobis and Biton has surely done her sons a great favor in precipitating their death (however unwittingly) at a most propitious moment—immediately after their remarkable feat of filial piety and its public acknowledgement by the Argives. For all of this, however, echoes of the Homeric contrast between divine knowledge and human ignorance remain to be found in Herodotus' account. First, we have Solon's explicit statement that by means of the brothers' deaths the god “made plain” (διέδεξε, 31.3) to the crowd of Argive onlookers what was presumably unclear to them previously—namely, that it is better (under certain circumstances, at least¹⁹) for a human being to be dead than alive:

¹⁹ As Regenbogen (1965, 386–88) demonstrates, the dour view that it is best for a man never to have been born, and second best to die as soon as possible after birth, is Greek proverbial wisdom attested *inter alia* by Theognis 425–28, Soph. *OC* 1224–27, and a fragment (44 Rose) of the Aristotelian dialogue *Eudemus*, where the speaker is Silenus, in conversation with his captor, the Phrygian king Midas. In my view this proverbial wisdom takes on a significantly different meaning in the context of Solon's conversation with Croesus—namely, that it is best for a man to be dead or to die at the right moment, at the crowning moment of his life, such as Cleobis and Biton's youthful service on behalf of their mother and the goddess, or Tellos' display of martial valor at the end of his longer, fuller life (hence his priority in Solon's ranking). For this view, see Shapiro 1996, 351–52, and for τεθνάναι (31.3) as referring to the manner of one's death rather than the state of being dead, see Konstan 1983, 16. For a different (to my mind, less convincing) view see Lloyd 1987, who on the basis of Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1100a distinguishes between two possible meanings of the Solonian paradox that “no living man is happy.” He understands Tellos to exemplify one of them (that it is only safe to call someone happy once dead, and thus safe from the fluctuations of fortune), and Cleobis and Biton the other (someone is only happy when dead).

ταῦτα δέ σφι ποιήσασι καὶ ὁφθεῖσι ὑπὸ τῆς πανηγύριος τελευτῇ τοῦ βίου
ἀρίστη ἐπεγένετο, διέδεξε τε ἐν τούτοις ὁ θεὸς ὡς ἄμεινον εἶη ἀνθρώπων
τεθνάναι μᾶλλον ἢ ζῶειν. (31.3)

When they had performed this feat and been seen by the people assembled for the feast, their lives came to an exemplary end, and the god thereby made plain that it is better for a mortal to be dead than alive.

This revelation will have come as an especially stunning surprise to the mother of Cleobis and Biton, who indeed precipitates it by asking Hera to reward her sons' extraordinary act of piety with "the greatest boon that a mortal can receive":

ἡ δὲ μήτηρ περιχαρὴς ἐοῦσα τῷ τε ἔργῳ καὶ τῇ φήμῃ, σῶσα ἀντίον τοῦ
ἀγάλματος εὔχετο Κλεόβι τε καὶ Βίτωνι τοῖσι ἐωυτῆς τέκνοις, οἳ μιν ἐτίμησαν
μεγάλως, τὴν θεὸν δοῦναι τὸ ἀνθρώπων τυχεῖν ἄριστόν ἐστι. (31.4)

Their mother, overjoyed by their deed and the acclaim, stood before the goddess' image and prayed that she give to Cleobis and Biton, her own children, who had honored her greatly, the greatest boon that a mortal can receive.

I consider the description of the mother in the act of prayer as *περιχαρής*, "overjoyed," to be a Herodotean masterstroke. In its nine other appearances in the *Histories*—all of them in the voice of the primary narrator—*περιχαρής* always foreshadows suffering for the person so described, thus exemplifying the characteristic Herodotean perception of human pleasure and prosperity as short-lived.²⁰ Moreover, in two of those instances it describes parents who are themselves indirectly responsible for the imminent deaths of their children, which in their deluded joy they cannot foresee.²¹ If (as I believe) the first appearance of this adjective has the same ominous force as subsequent examples, Herodotus manages with a

²⁰ For *περιχαρής* (also found at 1.119.2, 3.35.3, 3.157.3, 4.84.2, 5.32, 7.37.3, 7.215, 9.49.1, and 9.109.3), see Chiasson 1983. On the broader topic of joy, prosperity, and even hope as precarious and perilous states of mind in the *Histories*, see (e.g.) Bischoff 1932, 36, n. 1, Flory 1978, Lateiner 1977 and 1982; cf. de Heer 1969 for a comprehensive study of his titular terms of prosperity (and related words) in Greek literature from epic through the end of the fifth century B.C.E.

²¹ The parents in question are Harpagus (1.119.2) and Oeobazus (4.84.2). The latter's situation bears an especially close resemblance to that of Cleobis and Biton's mother: he asks Darius to exempt one of his sons from the Scythian expedition, and rejoices at the king's willingness to leave them all behind—not realizing that Darius intends to have them put to death.

single word both to express and to explode a mother's intense delight in her children; he permits tragedy to cast a potent, passing shadow in an otherwise celebratory context by focusing, for a brief moment, on the emotional state of the mother, who will grieve the loss of her sons, no matter how timely and triumphant their demise from Solon's perspective. The revelation of her fateful ignorance in the presence of the goddess recalls Metanira's experience in the *Hymn to Demeter*; nonetheless, her description as περιχαρής, unlike Demeter's angry response to Metanira's interference, need not imply criticism or lack of sympathy from an author whose own characteristically cautious speculation on the actions and motives of the gods suggests a profound awareness that divine wisdom is elusive of human understanding.²²

But how—if at all—does such a reading of περιχαρής fit into the context of Solon's attempt to persuade Croesus that Cleobis and Biton are more blessed than the king of Lydia? I have noted that every other instance of περιχαρής in the *Histories* appears not (as here) in the direct speech of a Herodotean character but in the voice of the primary narrator, communicating the imminence of disaster to an audience not directly involved in the events he recounts (the "external primary narratee-focalizee," in de Jong's terminology). When Herodotus, therefore, has Solon use the word to describe the mother of young men ranked among the *olbiōtatoi* by the Athenian, does Herodotus simply obtrude his own perspective as primary narrator upon Solon, effectively drowning out the voice of the secondary narrator for the sake of his own communication with the audience of the *Histories*? If so, we are forced to acknowledge an apparent discrepancy between the ominous connotation of the adjective in Herodotus' narrative voice and the celebratory circumstances of its use at the secondary level of communication between Solon and Croesus.

Alternatively, might Herodotus wish not to efface or ignore this

²² For περιχαρής in this context (and others) as sympathetic rather than critical, see Chiasson 1983, 117 (pace Flory 1978, 150). For Herodotus' pious wariness with regard to statements of divine causation, see, e.g., Lateiner 1989, 197–203. Note that the metaphysical caution of the Herodotean narrator is far removed from the metaphysical certainty of the Herodotean Solon, which receives unmistakable emphasis at the beginning of his explanatory speech to Croesus at 32.1: ὦ Κροῖσε, ἐπιστάμενόν με τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐν φθονερὸν τε καὶ παραχῶδες ἐπειρωτᾶς ἀνθρωπείων πρηγμάτων περὶ ("Croesus, I know that the deity is utterly resentful and disruptive of the human affairs concerning which you question me"). By significant contrast, in his own narrative voice Herodotus claims knowledge (ἐπιστάμενος, 1.5.4) only of the empirical, irrefutable fact that human prosperity is unstable; he makes no claim to know the underlying reason(s) for it.

discrepancy, but to emphasize it for the sake of an ironic contrast between the primary narrator's privileged understanding of περιχαρής (as portending doom) and Solon's ingenuous, ignorant use of the term (as merely denoting intense joy, with no suggestion of trouble to come)? In fact περιχαρής is put to just such an ironic use in its one appearance in the extant Sophoclean corpus, when the chorus of Salaminian sailors, misled by Ajax' *Trugrede*, express their delight in the hero's apparent change of heart.²³ However, the Herodotean Solon is no misguided Sophoclean chorus, and is scarcely a suitable candidate for such ironic deflation: the cornerstone of his characterization in the Lydian *logos*, from his first arrival in Sardis as *sophistēs* to the vindication of his counsel during Croesus' ordeal on the pyre, is his extraordinary insight, especially into the relationship between gods and humans. Consequently, I propose a third alternative, whereby the ominous connotation for which I have argued would characterize περιχαρής at both the primary and secondary levels of narration. For we may understand the adjective, even within its laudatory context, to underscore for both Croesus and the audience of the *Histories* one reason why Cleobis and Biton are relegated to second place in Solon's ranking of the *olbiōtatoi*. In contrast to Tellos, who had children of his own and lived to see the birth and survival of his grandchildren, the Argive brothers die before they can marry and produce offspring—and, what is more, they afflict the previous generation in doing so, as implied by περιχαρής. This familial disadvantage in comparison to Tellos has a parallel in the civic sphere, which is articulated through the initiatory schema that shapes the structure of the entire narrative, as we will see below.

Finally, within the broader context of the Lydian *logos*, the plight of Cleobis and Biton's mother anticipates and elicits comparison with the experience of King Croesus. For the mother's failure to comprehend the true import of her superlative request for "the greatest boon a mortal can receive" is analogous to the king's failure to comprehend the true import of the superlative recognition he craves as "most blessed of human beings." The result of her request is the unintended death of her sons, and the result of Croesus' mistaken notion that he is *olbiōtatos*, despite Solon's warning, is divine *nemesis* manifested immediately in the

²³ After Ajax' speech, the sailors begin their ode with the words (693) ἔφριξ' ἔρωτι, περιχαρής δ' ἀνεντάμην ("I thrill with longing and soar aloft with utmost joy"). In his general remarks on the role of the chorus in Sophoclean dramatic irony, Winnington-Ingram 1980, 200, notes that their words "may carry a significance beyond—and even contrary to—their conscious thought."

death of Atys, as Herodotus speculates in his own narrative voice at 34.1. It is in the circumstances of their sons' deaths that Croesus and the mother of Cleobis and Biton part company decisively, with far more grievous consequences for the king. The death of Atys is a death unaccompanied by public honor because Croesus, in a vain attempt to save the prince's life from the doom foretold in his dream, forbade Atys to lead the Lydians in battle. Thus unlike the mother of Cleobis and Biton, who precipitates their death at their moment of greatest glory, Croesus precipitates Atys' death under circumstances of unmitigated disaster for all involved—the victim, his father, and the star-crossed slayer Adrastus. While the Argive community honors the feat of Cleobis and Biton with statues dedicated at Delphi, where they will be admired by a Panhellenic and indeed international audience, Croesus' burial of Atys is described as a private affair (1.45.3), in the denouement of an episode intended to evoke the manner and mood of contemporary Attic tragedy (cf. Chiasson 2003, 8–19).

Herodotus' artful treatment of the archaic association between maternity and mortality has gone previously unnoticed. By contrast, recent scholarly discussion has established the presence of initiatory elements²⁴ in Herodotus' narrative, whose setting is taken to be the festival of Argive Hera known as the Heraia or Hecatombaia. On this occasion, as the scattered ancient testimonia suggest, the priestess of Hera was borne on a cart drawn by a pair of cattle from the city of Argos to the Heraion; the procession also included young men in arms, young women perhaps dressed in white, and unyoked cattle bound to be sacrificed to the "yoking" goddess of marriage, Hera Ζυγία (see LSJ s.v. ζύγιος II).²⁵ While the emphasis falls on female experience in much of the ancient testimony, Walter Burkert (1983, 162–64) focuses on evidence, including Herodotus' story of Cleobis and Biton, that highlights male

²⁴ Complaints about the ubiquity of initiation rituals in recent analyses of Greek myths have been lodged by, *inter alios*, Forbes Irving 1989, 50–57, and Buxton 1994, 2, 219; the former has fundamental reservations about the approach as a whole, while the latter thinks the approach valuable in some cases (e.g., analyses of the scapegoat and maenadism). Dowden 1999 offers a general defense of the method, based upon the "psychological force" of the dialectic with "rite of passage" in narrative literature. With specific reference to Herodotean narrative, Sourvinou-Inwood (1991) and Griffiths (1999) discern the influence of initiatory ritual in the stories of Periander and Lycophron and the Apolloniate prophet Euenius, respectively.

²⁵ For a properly cautious reconstruction of the festival as incorporating both male and female initiation rites, complete with ancient testimonia and secondary literature, see Seaford 1988, 122–24. For discussion focused on the activities of women's choruses at the Heraia, see Calame 1997, 119–20.

participation in the festival. Drawing on sources that mention adolescent boys who carry a shield as leading the procession, Burkert interprets the procession as marking an initiation for ephebes now capable of bearing arms. While acknowledging that the gender bias of Herodotus' story tends to privilege the male presence at the festival over the female, Richard Seaford addresses the significance of the brothers' submission to the yoke, which is a familiar image for the female transition from adolescence to the adult state of marriage. In Seaford's view, the yoking of males rather than females in Herodotus may reflect what Jean-Pierre Vernant has identified as a characteristic feature of warrior initiation ceremonies—"temporary participation in the nature of the opposite sex," as exemplified by Achilles' virginal disguise on the island of Scyros.²⁶ At the same time, Seaford believes that the yoke assumed by Cleobis and Biton is properly martial rather than marital: citing the use of ζυγόν and derivatives in military contexts, he suggests that "warfare for men, like marriage for women, required entry into a 'yoke'—the line of battle."²⁷ Solon's initial identification of the brothers as prize-winning athletes is perhaps significant in this regard. In a discussion of beauty among different age groups (*Rhet.* 1.1361b7–14), Aristotle, for one, identifies trials of speed and strength as characteristic activities of a youth (*neos*), as demonstrated by competitors in the pentathlon; when the young man reaches his prime, in Aristotle's next age-grouping (*akmazōn*), he typically applies his physical strength to acts of war rather than athletic competition.

While this specific scenario of Cleobis and Biton as warriors-in-training is speculative, there are various textual details that call attention

²⁶ Seaford 1988, 123, quoting Vernant 1980, 23 (with reference to Achilles on 24). Similarly, for the young Theseus' effeminate appearance, derided upon his first arrival in Athens, see Paus. 1.19.1 and Strauss 1993, 120. Cf. also the striking description by Teiresias of Creon's young son Menoekeus in Euripides' *Phoenissae*, whose death as a virgin could result in the military salvation of the Theban state: οὔτος δὲ πῶλος τῇιδ' ἀναιμένος πόλει / θανὼν πατρίαν γαίαν ἐκώσσειεν ἄν (947–48) ("This foal, dedicated to this city in which he roams free, could by dying save his fatherland"). This couplet memorably combines a common image of adolescent female wildness needing to be tamed by marriage (see Mastronarde 1994 on πῶλος) with the ideal cherished by the adult male citizen soldier: to save his *polis* by giving his life.

²⁷ Seaford 1988, 123, with n. 40. For alternate interpretations of the brothers' yoking, see Sansone (1991, 122–23), who considers it one of several features assimilating Cleobis and Biton to bovine sacrificial victims (they also approach their sacrificial death willingly, as prime physical specimens, and die in the sanctuary of the goddess without suffering pain or causing pollution); and O'Brien (1993, 147–48), who understands it to symbolize a youthful fulfillment in death that brings real bliss (*olbos*) and typifies the relationship between Hera, as the "seasonal" goddess, and heroes generally.

to their transitional or liminal status as adolescents poised between childhood and manhood. Before their death, Solon consistently refers to the brothers as either young men, *νεηνία* (31.2, 3, 5), or their mother's children, *τέκνα* (31.3, 4). The first indication that Cleobis and Biton are taking leave of their mother's world occurs in the reception bestowed upon them at Hera's temple, which is marked by gender segregation: the Argive men laud the brothers, while the Argive women praise their mother. The aftermath of the brothers' feat is described as follows:

Ἀργεῖοι μὲν γὰρ περιστάντες ἐμακάριζον τῶν νεηνιέων τὴν ῥώμην, αἱ δὲ Ἀργεῖαι τὴν μητέρα αὐτῶν, οἷον τέκνων ἐκύρησε. (4) ἡ δὲ μήτηρ περιχαρὴς εὐδουσα τῷ τε ἔργῳ καὶ τῇ φήμῃ, σῶσα ἀντίον τοῦ ἀγάλματος εὐχετο Κλεόβι τε καὶ Βίτωνι τοῖσι ἐωυτῆς τέκνοισι, οἳ μιν ἐτίμησαν μεγάλως, τὴν θεὸν δοῦναι τὸ ἀνθρώπῳ τυχεῖν ἄριστόν ἐστι. (5) μετὰ ταύτην δὲ τὴν εὐχὴν ὡς ἔθυσάν τε καὶ εὐωχῆθησαν, κατακοιμηθέντες ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ ἱρῷ οἱ νεηνία οὐκέτι ἀνέστησαν, ἀλλ' ἐν τέλει τοῦτ' ἔσχοντο. Ἀργεῖοι δὲ σφεων εἰκόνας ποιησάμενοι ἀνέθεσαν ἐς Δελφοὺς ὡς ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων γενομένων. (31.3–5)

For the Argive males gathered around the young men and pronounced them blessed for their strength, while the Argive women lauded their mother for having had such children. Now the boys' mother, overjoyed by their deed and the acclaim, stood before the goddess' image and prayed that she give to Cleobis and Biton, her own children, who had honored her greatly, the greatest boon that a mortal can receive. After this prayer, when they had sacrificed and feasted, the young men lay down in the temple itself and arose no more, but were held fast in this *telos* [see discussion below]. But the Argives had statues made of them and dedicated them at Delphi, on the grounds that they had shown themselves to be outstanding men.

As already noted, in this passage Cleobis and Biton are repeatedly referred to as young men and their mother's children. The last of these references comes in 31.5, where we are told that after lying down in the goddess' temple—thus becoming earthbound like Demophoön, flung to the ground by an angry Demeter—"the young men arose no more, but were held fast in this *telos*." The meaning of *telos* in this context is disputed and doubtless polyvalent; Seaford suggests plausibly that it means not only "rite of passage" but also "ending," "completion," and "service to a god."²⁸ I myself am inclined to add yet another possibility,

²⁸ Seaford 1994, 230. Nagy 1990, 245, n. 19, argues (too narrowly, in my view) for the sense "service to a god."

since τέλος is also used as a semi-technical term in describing the successive stages of human life: LSJ s.v. II.1 cites such examples as ἡβης τέλος, ἀνδρὸς τέλος, and πρεσβύτου τέλος. The brothers were also held fast in this (adolescent) stage of life: they remain forever νενήϊαι, as their commemoration by statues of young men (*kouroi*) reminds visitors to Apollo's sacred precinct in Delphi.

And yet there is ostensibly contrary evidence in the statement that the Argives dedicated these statues because the brothers proved themselves to be outstanding *men* (ὡς ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων γενομένων). Nicole Loraux has discussed the use of the formulaic phrase *anēr agathos genomenos*, “having become a good man,” in the Athenian funeral oration and elsewhere to describe the valor of a citizen who has died in battle; she has also noted its similarity to the phrase *andra gignesthai*, “to become a man,” as denoting a young man's enrollment on the Athenian deme register—his achievement of civic majority—in his eighteenth year.²⁹ Herodotus for his part typically uses the phrase *anēr aristos genomenos*, with the adjective heightened to the superlative degree, to describe the heroic action and (sometimes) death of Greek citizen-soldiers in battle.³⁰ Its application to Cleobis and Biton, who neither die nor indeed vie on the battlefield, is therefore exceptional, as John Gould has noted; Leslie Kurke considers the exception a pointed one, suggesting that Herodotus thereby “assimilates Kleobis and Biton's extraordinary feat of strength to the ultimate civic service, death in battle.”³¹ I understand the participial phrase ὡς ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων γενομένων to signify the granting of both adult male status and the highest civic accolade (for death in battle) to boys who died under truly remarkable circumstances, but undeniably before reaching manhood and far removed from combat. As such these accolades can only be honorary, and I suggest that Herodotus indicates

²⁹ Loraux 1986, 99–101, 105.

³⁰ In addition to Cleobis and Biton, Herodotus uses the phrase of Pytheas the Aeginetan (7.181.1), whom the Persians keep alive, despite his many wounds, in admiration of his martial valor; of the Spartans Leonidas (7.224.1) and Dienekes (7.226.1), who die fighting at Thermopylae; of the conviction held by each of the (surviving) Greek commanders that he himself had been the bravest fighter at Salamis (8.123.2); and twice (9.71.2, 3) in the context of the dispute concerning whether Aristodemus or Poseidonius (neither of whom survived) had been the bravest Greek fighter at Plataea. (The word *anēr* is understood in the examples cited from the eighth and ninth books; also, the usage at 7.9 γ listed in Powell 1938 is dubious, since the verb is “to be” [εἶμεν] rather than “to become”—a significant distinction, in the view of Loraux 1986, 100. This last usage is also remarkable because it is applied by Mardonius to Persian warriors rather than Greek [on Persian martial valor, see Flower and Marincola 2002, 15–16].)

³¹ Gould 1989, 62; Kurke 1999, 147.

as much by adding adverbial ὥς to the participle, which here not only serves to distinguish the Argives' view from Solon's perspective but also has a contrafactual connotation.³² Thus a more accurate translation of the phrase than the one given above—"on the grounds that they had shown themselves to be outstanding men"—would describe the Argive dedication of the brothers' statues "as if they had fought bravely in battle, as adult citizens." In the context of Solon's speech to Croesus, this qualification serves to distinguish Cleobis and Biton's honorary accolades from the literal citizen's death suffered in battle by the Athenian Tellos, whom Solon judges to be the most blessed human of all he has known. Thus Tellos enjoys a civic advantage as well as a familial one over the brothers; his priority in Solon's assessment of extraordinary human prosperity is doubly justified.

It is striking that despite their death, the experience of Cleobis and Biton as described in the *Histories* could be said to exemplify Robert Garland's perception (1990, 197) of the Greek male's coming of age in terms of "a graduated enlargement of the social persona through a series of progressive identifications with an increasingly extended social group." As his mythical paradigm of male maturation, Garland (1990, 170–73) adduces Telemachus in the *Odyssey*, who first asserts himself as head of his household (in Odysseus' absence) by reprimanding his mother Penelope; then he asserts public as well as private power by calling the Ithacans to an assembly for the first time since Odysseus' departure; and finally he establishes his social identity beyond Ithaca by visiting the foreign kings Nestor and Menelaus. Cleobis and Biton undergo a similar progression, as they first appear in the presence and service of their mother; then, after drawing her cart to Hera's temple, they receive public recognition from the male members of their *polis*; finally, the dedication of their statues by the Argives at Delphi wins them Panhellenic and indeed international recognition.

Viewed from this perspective, Cleobis and Biton could stand beside Telemachus as legendary embodiments of the Greek male's maturation process. At the same time, however, the maturation of Cleobis and Biton is patently aberrant, since the death they die is a literal one rather than the symbolic initiatory death that typically signals the transition from one social status or category to another.³³ Thus the initiatory status

³² For ὥς with the participle as having contrafactual force, see Smyth 1956 section 2086 b and the examples given in Powell 1938 s.v. ὥς D.3 (to which I would add 1.31.5).

³³ For symbolic initiatory death, see Seaford 1988, 120–25, Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 257, with n. 73. In a fascinating passage from the civic funeral oration delivered in 322 B.C.E.

of the brothers appears to be utterly ambivalent: on the one hand they die while still young men, on the other they are granted honorary adult status by their fellow citizens, as indicated by the phrase ὡς ἀνδρῶν ἀρίστων γενομένων. Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood finds a similar initiatory ambivalence in divergent traditions concerning the mythical Hippolytus, son of Theseus, and Lycophron, son of the Corinthian tyrant Periander, who as represented by Herodotus (she argues persuasively) bears recognizably mythical traits. For both young men, one tradition is preserved that ends in literal death before reaching adulthood and civic majority, while a variant version ends in symbolic death followed by “some sort of reintegration into another status.”³⁴ This ambivalent initiatory status also finds striking mythical parallels in such female devotees of Artemis as Iphigeneia, Kallisto, and Atalanta—adolescent females whom, in Seaford’s words, “Artemis kills, causes to be sacrificed, or turned into wild animals, but who nevertheless, occupying a place between the goddess and mortal girls, sometimes also conform (in the same or different versions of the myth) to that mortal necessity of sex and marriage that seems to contradict Artemis’ will.”³⁵ Seaford’s characterization of these females as “occupying a place between the goddess and

by the Athenian statesman Hyperides, literal death in battle is explicitly equated with initiation into manhood (uniquely in Greek literature, to my knowledge). Hyperides argues that the Athenians who perished in the Lamian war should not be regarded as having departed life in misery, but as having been gloriously “born again” by their experience: τότε μὲν γὰρ παῖδες ὄντες ἄφρονες ἦσαν, νῦν δ’ ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ γεγόνασιν (29) (“For then, being children, they were mindless; but now they have become brave men”). Loraux (1986, 100–101) discerns here “a fearful initiation in which death no longer has anything symbolic about it, in which *thanatos* is a transition but also a beginning and end, in which one is born into a new status only by renouncing forever the condition of the living creature.”

³⁴ Sourvinou-Inwood 1991, 257–58. In the variant tradition about Hippolytus (Apollod. 3.10.3, cf. Frazer 1921, ii.17, n. 4), he is brought back to life by Asclepius and leaves his native community without being reconciled to Theseus; in Italian legend (cf., e.g., Paus. 2.27.4), he migrates west to become king of Aricia on the Alban hills near Rome. Lycophron’s alternate tradition (cf. Nicolaus of Damascus, *FGrH* 90 F 60) is more speculative since it involves understanding the nephew of Periander, said to have succeeded him after Lycophron’s death, as a double of Lycophron. In Sourvinou-Inwood’s reading, at any rate, “the old Lykophron dies to be replaced by the new, adult Lykophron, presented here in the guise of another character, his cousin.”

³⁵ Seaford 1988, 124. In various sources Iphigeneia is either sacrificed at Aulis, turned into or replaced by an animal, or married to Achilles. Kallisto bears Zeus a son but is also turned into a bear and killed by Artemis. Atalanta reluctantly consents to marriage after long resistance, but in some sources she and her husband are transformed into lions—asexual animals to the extent that in popular belief lions were thought to mate not with one another but with panthers. Additional mythographic detail in Seaford 1988, 124–25, nn. 49–52.

mortal girls” is suggestive, and it underscores how Herodotus’ initiatory framework also accommodates an issue of fundamental importance both for archaic Greek myth and for the task he sets himself in the opening sentence of the *Histories*—namely, the mitigation of human mortality by means of undying fame or honor that lives on after a man’s death.

Both the mythic Demophoön and Herodotus’ ostensibly historical Tellos live on after their deaths by means of public recognition—Demophoön through community ritual conducted in his memory, Tellos through such honor as attended the place of his public burial (perhaps heroic cult, as suggested by Kurke 1993, 154). Cleobis and Biton, uniquely, are said to enjoy two stages of public recognition—one preceding and one following their deaths. The first of these stages is ephemeral: at the temple of Argive Hera, the Herodotean Solon tells us, Argive males hailed them as blessed—ἐμακάριζον, 31.3—for their extraordinary feat of piety. In archaic poetry, the adjective μάκαρ is typically predicated of gods rather than men, and indeed a fragment of Solon’s own elegiac poetry proclaims that no human being is μάκαρ;³⁶ Pindar’s only use of the verb μακαρίζω suggests that he hesitates to describe a mere mortal in such lofty terms.³⁷ Nonetheless, there is solid Homeric precedent for Herodotus’ use of the verb μακαρίζω (despite what I perceive as its transgressive potential) to express appropriate recognition of achievement that is extraordinary by human standards, but not so extraordinary or of such a nature as to elicit divine disapproval and punishment.³⁸ If the

³⁶ For μάκαρ, see de Heer 1969, 4–11, 14, 16, 21–23, 28–32, 81–82. The Solonian fragment (14 West) reads: οὐδὲ μάκαρ οὐδεὶς πέλεται βροτός, ἀλλὰ πονηροὶ / πάντες ὅσους θνητοὺς ἡέλιος καθορᾷ (“Not even one mortal is blessed, but wretched are all those whom the sun looks down upon as subject to death”). The adjective μάκαρ appears only twice elsewhere in Solon’s extant poetry, used in both cases (4.2, 13.3) to describe the gods.

³⁷ Pindar pointedly (and, I suggest, paradoxically) “blesses” the father of Aristagoras as a mortal at *Nemean* 11.11 (ἄνδρα δ’ ἐγὼ μακαρίζω). The generalizing qualification of this praise that immediately follows culminates in a vivid reminder to anyone who surpasses others in wealth, beauty, and athletic achievement: θανάτῳ μεμνάσθω περιστέλλων μέλη, / καὶ τελευτὰν ἀπάντων γὰρ ἐπιεσώμενος (“Let him remember that mortal are the limbs he clothes and that earth is the last garment of all he will wear,” 15–16; text and translation from Race 1997).

³⁸ The Homeric use of the verb at *Od.* 15.538 = 17.165 = 19.311 clearly implies no threat of divine reprisal. The same can be said for Herodotus’ use of the verb at 9.93.4, which acknowledges the superhuman status of Euenius of Apollonia in the wake of his receiving the gift of prophecy from the gods in compensation for his wrongful blinding by his fellow citizens. By contrast, when Xerxes, in a show of outrageous self-regard, uses the verb reflexively to congratulate himself while reviewing his troops at Abydos (7.45, cf. 7.46.1), the effect is transgressive and ominous. The reflexive usage and Xerxes’ ultimate

brothers soon lie dead, their mortality made manifest by their mother's ignorant joy and the informed will of the god(dess),³⁹ the broader context of Solon's argument represents death *under these particular circumstances*, not as the leveling blow of a resentful deity, but indeed as mankind's greatest boon. Or rather, it is not death *per se* but its sequel that justifies Solon's high estimation of Cleobis and Biton's good fortune, namely, public acclaim that supersedes their reception at Hera's temple in both temporal and geographical extension. For the statues dedicated to the brothers at Delphi by their fellow Argives guarantee the transmission of their story to future generations and to a Panhellenic audience of pilgrims to Apollo's sanctuary.

These statues, whether or not they are to be identified with those unearthed at Delphi over a century ago (cf. n. 1 above), belong to the class of archaic memorial images known to modern scholarship as *kouroi*, which are widely believed to have a specifically heroizing function, thus bestowing upon their subjects an intermediate status between humanity and divinity.⁴⁰ Given the nature of their story, of course, it is especially appropriate that Cleobis and Biton should live on as *kouroi*, eternally youthful icons of man at his physical peak and fitting dedications to Apollo, the divine embodiment of the male ephebe. Indeed, it has even been suggested that the statues themselves gave birth to the story, and then over time came to be seen as its proof.⁴¹ However that may be, it is also worth noting that by incorporating the story of Cleobis and Biton's heroic commemoration into the Lydian *logos*, Herodotus has himself in

defeat call to mind Herodotus' conjecture in his own narrative voice that *nemesis* from the gods overlooked Croesus because he considered himself to be *olbiōtatos* (1.34.1).

³⁹ Although "the god" said to demonstrate that death is better than life for human beings is marked as masculine by its article (ὁ θεός, 31.3), "the goddess" to whom Cleobis' and Biton's mother subsequently prays is marked by the same means as feminine (τῇ θεῷ, 31.4). For discussion of possible explanations for this variation between generalizing and particular terms for deity, see Harrison 2000, 174–75.

⁴⁰ For the heroizing function of *kouroi*, see (e.g.) Robertson 1985, 170, Spivey 1996, 108–9 (discerning "genuine intimations of immortality" in Cleobis' and Biton's final disposition), and Steiner 2001, 12–13. Spivey and Steiner both emphasize the evocation by *kouroi* of Homeric heroes of a bygone age, just as I have mined Homeric poetry for parallels to the story of Cleobis and Biton.

⁴¹ For Apollo as the divine manifestation of the *kouros*, see Burkert 1985, 143; for the statues of the brothers as engendering their story, see Harrison 2000, 35, n. 11 (with additional bibliography). Herodotus himself argues that the story of the Egyptian king Mycerinus' daughter (2.131) was fabricated on the basis of statues whose missing hands were accounted for in erroneously imaginative and grisly fashion.

turn expanded their community of admirers, both geographically and temporally, to include all readers of his *Histories*. Herodotus' written word has thus proved more effective still than heroic statuary in preserving from the ravages of time the *kleos* of the brothers' great and amazing deed.⁴²

I have argued that the presence in this famous Herodotean story of mythical and ritual elements is intentional, and intended to serve various purposes. The pointedly "legendary" introduction of the story sets it apart at once from the more historically reliable biography of the Athenian Tellos, Solon's choice as the most blessed man he has ever seen. Herodotus also exploits the initiatory schema structuring the narrative as a whole to distinguish Tellos, who dies in battle as a citizen-soldier, from Cleobis and Biton, who die young but are accorded honorary status as adult citizens and warriors. The manner of the brothers' death combines distinctly Delphic myth with the Panhellenic mythical motif that makes a mother responsible for the mortality of her heroic sons. The representation of Cleobis and Biton's mother as unwittingly, indeed joyously precipitating their deaths (however honorific in Solon's view) lends characteristically Herodotean poignancy to an otherwise celebratory narrative, and implicitly acknowledges familial misfortune unknown to Tellos. In the broader context of the Lydian *logos*, the mother's role also anticipates the adversity of Croesus, who facilitates the death of his son Atys under much less favorable circumstances. Finally, by extolling and extending the communal remembrance through which the brothers ultimately transcend their mortality, Herodotus demonstrates the purpose of his research, as announced in the opening sentence of the *Histories*, and the common conceptual ground he shares with the mythological traditions of archaic Greece. In important ways of which he is well aware, the "Father of History" remains a descendant and disciple of myth.⁴³

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⁴² Cf. the contrast drawn by Pindar in *Nemean* 5 between epinician song and dedicatory statues as alternate means of celebrating and commemorating athletic victory, discussed by Golden 1998, 84–85.

⁴³ I thank Barbara Gold and the journal's anonymous readers for their sharp-eyed but supportive criticism, which has improved this essay substantially. Thanks as well to Deborah Boedeker and Victor Bers, who graciously commented on an earlier version of the paper; to my colleague Don Kyle for bibliographical assistance; and to Susan Shapiro for discussion over the years of Herodotus in general and Cleobis and Biton in particular.

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9

ALAN GRIFFITHS

Stories and storytelling in the *Histories*

Any reader who approaches Herodotus' great book with the conventional assumptions of what a modern, Western, post-Thucydidean narrative history is or ought to be – that is, expecting a generally austere concentration on political and military affairs, perhaps citing the texts of treaties, adducing inscriptional evidence, and so on – is likely to be disconcerted, if also delighted, by the way the text unfolds itself. One does not immediately see what is coming. The prospectus-paragraph sets out the project clearly enough. Two parallel clauses, the second of which reinforces, varies and amplifies the first, declare the author's aim as being 'to prevent the memory of human actions being obliterated by the passage of time, and to ensure that great and wonderful achievements, whether carried out by Greeks or by foreigners, are not denied their proper celebration'. It goes on immediately to define a more precise focus: 'to investigate why they (the Greeks and foreigners) went to war with each other' (*praeef.*).

And indeed by the beginning of chapter 6 (say, in our terms, a couple of pages), Herodotus fingers the man who he is 'personally convinced' set the long series of hostilities in motion: Croesus the king of Lydia. Croesus was the first ruler to levy tribute from the Greek settlements on the west coast of Asia Minor; he was also, we go on to discover in the course of the first book, the man who made the fateful mistake of attempting an eastward expansion of his kingdom and suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Persians, thus bringing Greeks and Persians face to face for the first time and setting the scene for the wars that would follow.

But before attention settles on Croesus, and immediately after the short prologue, we are treated to a series of thumbnail sketches of events from much earlier history in which (we are supposed to believe) alternative eastern accounts of the origin of the enmity are presented. The Persian version starts as follows (1.1):

Persian scholars say that the Phoenicians were responsible for the conflict. Arriving in the Mediterranean as immigrants from the 'Red Sea', and making their home in the country where they still live, they set straight to work in the business of long-haul trading in Egyptian and Assyrian commodities. One of the ports at which they touched was Argos, at that time indisputably the chief city of what we now call Greece. Putting in, then, at this place Argos, they set out their wares; and on the fifth or sixth day after their arrival, when they were almost out of stock, down to the beach came a crowd of women which included the king's daughter. Her name, they say – and the Greeks concur in this – was Io, and her father Inachus. As these women clustered around the stern of the ship, each buying what looked the most attractive articles, suddenly the Phoenicians exchanged a signal and rushed forward to grab them. Most got away safely, but Io was among a group who were seized. The Phoenicians bundled them into the hold and took off for Egypt.

And that, according to the Persians – but not the Greeks – is how Io ended up in Egypt, and that was the first act of aggression.

From generality we are instantly plunged into specificity: a moment in what even Herodotus would have called ancient history (but which we might call myth, or legend). And here we find immediately displayed some of the characteristic stigmata of the Herodotean story: a talent for vivid realisation in almost cinematographic detail ('clustered around the stern of the ship'); clever touches of pseudo-precision ('fifth or sixth day');¹ the rationalisation of mythical stories into real-world, natural events; fussy authorial nudges; and claimed sources ('Persian scholars say'; 'the Greeks concur in this'; 'according to the Persians – but not the Greeks').

I draw attention to this very first micro-narrative not simply because it is the first of so many but because Herodotus might almost have written it as a programmatic sample of the wares he was himself about to offer to his readers. Implicitly it seems to say: this is what I have for sale; this is what you should expect if you choose to continue. You are going to have to get used along the way to constant sharp-focussed diversions of this sort. Will you buy the product? Will you allow yourself to be seduced and carried off to Egypt?

The prospective purchaser then notes how this eccentric version of the Io myth is followed by three similar accounts of the legends of Medea, Europa and Helen, all radically recast; how then the Croesus narrative line has hardly begun before Herodotus reverts to a flashback about his ancestor Gyges (ch. 8); and finally, how the story of the poet Arion is told at ch. 24 without even a token semblance of proper motivation: 'It was to Periander' – who has himself, we may observe, entered the story rather obliquely – 'that the

Corinthians, backed up by the Lesbians, say a most amazing event happened: the carrying ashore at Tainaron on a dolphin's back of Arion of Methymna.' An event which he proceeds to recount in detail. And this is how the *Histories*, or better *Inquiry*, continues through to the end, even if the side-glances thin out somewhat once we reach the second half of the work. Clearly, Herodotus is the kind of writer who conceives of historical narrative as a discourse which needs constant variation and enlivening by means of vivid digressions – as he himself asserts (4.30: 'right from the beginning my text has been on the look-out for additional material').

Reconstructing the past is a necessarily complex business in which the more facets that can be induced to refract the light, the better. Some attempt must be made to reproduce in the text not just political and military events but the full bandwidth of human activity. His declared intention to probe the history of 'small cities as well as great' (1.5) demonstrates his belief that explanatory significance may be found at the microscopic level as well as the macro. A goal-driven, unilinear narrative of event and causation, he feels, lacks flavour. Simply to shove a leg of lamb into the oven is not enough: to make a properly enjoyable dish it must first be spiked with garlic, rosemary and anchovy fillets, well seasoned and anointed with olive oil.

Another metaphor – text as stream – may help to illustrate how I propose to delimit the subject of 'storytelling' in this chapter. In his dialogue 'The Orator', Cicero characterises Herodotus' prose as 'flowing like a calm river without rocks or rapids': *sine ullis salebris quasi sedatus amnis fluit* (*Orat.* 39). But though he may be free of rough waters, that doesn't mean a bland and undifferentiated evenness. There are plenty of creeks and oxbows off to the side of the main stream, and plenty of places where the current temporarily pools and pauses. Let us distinguish these two kinds of opportunities for subsidiary narrative. If for our purposes we define a story as an embedded, discrete episodic unit² – 'pericope', in the jargon of New Testament study – it may be either a thickened, concentrated and closely-focussed detail of the main current ('pool') or a lateral diversion, backwards or forwards in narrative time ('creek'). Some examples will make this clearer:

- **Pools in the stream.** Here I exclude, as non-narrative, digressions of a factual kind, like those on the supposed impossibility of breeding mules in Elis (4.30), or the biological excursus on animal population size (3.108–9).
 - Scenes with memorable dialogue or visual effects. The author homes in, as if with a zoom lens, to provide vivid human interest in what had so far been a relatively neutral, unmarked account of events unfolding along the natural time-line of his history. So, for instance, two reports about

envoys requesting help from the Spartans: the Samian exiles who, driven to distraction by the obstinate laconicism of their hosts, finally abandon their eloquent rhetoric, hold up a sack, point to it, and say 'Bag needs flour' (3.46); and King Cleomenes' young daughter Gorgo shrewdly advising her father to send Aristagoras packing (5.51; compare 7.239). Sometimes this kind of foregrounding, with direct exchange of speech, may extend for several pages: think of the upbringing of King Cyrus of Persia (1.107–22), and note there how the author steps back from the drama to reclaim his narrative as the story approaches its devastating conclusion in ch. 119, before the lively dialogue-style resumes.³ A few notable examples from the multitude: Aristodicus remonstrates with Apollo (1.159); the unmasking of the Earless Impostor by the daughter of Otanes, with its lively exchange of letters and its tense climax (3.68–9); how the Persian Bagaeus encompassed the downfall of Oroetes (3.127–8); Euelthon's exasperated response to the nagging of Pheretimos of Cyrene (4.162); and the terrible tale of Xerxes' passion for his brother Masistes' wife – and then Masistes' daughter (9.108–13).

- Incidents in which, although there is no temporal dislocation, a tale seems to be told for its own sake, arbitrarily placed where it is either because Herodotus was determined to put it *somewhere*, or because he needed to fill out a slot which would otherwise have been embarrassingly empty. Take, for example, the account of the poet Arion, hung precariously on the chronological hook of the reign of the Corinthian dictator Periander (1.24); or the little moral tale of the delegation from Elis, judges of the Olympic games, visiting Egypt (!) and receiving some chastening advice on how their competition could be run more fairly (2.160). In the latter case it is surely clear that Herodotus knew nothing at all about the Pharaoh Psammis, and used this story – which could have gone anywhere – to create a sense of individual identity. Perhaps he thought of the Sicilian victor *Psaumis*, celebrated by Pindar in the fourth and fifth Olympian Odes.
- **Creeks off to the side**
 - Creeks looping backwards ('analeptic' material in Genette's narratological terminology). This type is ubiquitous, for when a new character crops up in the narrative it is natural for the author to supply relevant background information. Thus when Croesus is looking for Greek allies we get a resumé of recent events at Athens (1.59–64) and Sparta (65–8), each survey itself rich with subsidiary incident. The introduction of the Athenian aristocratic clan of the Alcmaeonidae at 6.115 triggers, after a short delay, an account of their previous history, culminating in the comic diptych of Alcmaeon emerging from Croesus' gold-vault

and Hippocleides dancing away his marriage to Agariste (6.125, 126–30). Sometimes such flashbacks occur at a further remove, as exemplary tales (*ainoi*) in speeches delivered by Herodotus' characters (see below, p. 135, on Soclees and Leotyichidas).

- Creeks looping forwards ('proleptic'). Less common is the detail which jumps ahead in time; perhaps because if done too obtrusively an author risks seeming to arrogate to himself the function of the prophet, or the inspired poet, or Apollo himself, 'who knew what was, what is, and is to be'. In spite of his deep interest in oracles, Herodotus himself projects a more modest persona than that of the omniscient time-lord. But note the little clutch of fast-forwards associated with the battle of Thermopylae: how the lucky Ameinocles later found grief (7.190); how the traitor Ephialtes eventually came to a bad end (7.213–14); what was to happen to the Spartiates who failed to die, for various reasons, along with their three hundred comrades (7.229–32); and the fate that lay in store for the Theban Leontidas' son Eurymachus (7.233).

Of course, even if he had wanted to provide a straightforward history of the Persian Wars together with the minimum amount of antecedent material necessary to their understanding, Herodotus would have found the data hard to control. Multi-threaded historical development cannot, by definition, be unrolled in a single narrative line, and events which take place in parallel must somehow be handled in series. What is so impressive about Herodotus is the way he turns this difficulty to advantage, cunningly building up his composite picture by choosing a single fundamental line (East v. West), and subordinating the other strands which he will need to introduce; the latter are then cut up and spliced into the main thread at carefully chosen points (e.g. the Athens and Sparta 'digression' in Book 1, already mentioned). As Felix Jacoby observed, 'It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Herodotus' entire art of organising his material consists in how and at what points he is able to incorporate digressions.'⁴

It is important to be clear, then, that the old view of Herodotus as a 'naïve' composer, and the consequent and condescending dismissal of his intricate construction as 'rambling', is no more helpful than was the ascription of Hesiod's compositional quirks to something called 'archaic thought', or the allegation in the heyday of positivist psychiatry that Tibullus' exquisitely-architected dreamy style was due to the poet's 'defective secondary brain function'.⁵ The knots and burrs in the growth of Herodotus' narrative grain are not defects, but intrinsic to the attraction of the timber's polished surface; they reflect his belief in the complex interaction between factors at the macro and the micro level (1.5).

Homer the dominant model

Herodotus' predecessors in prose-writing – geographers, mythographers and proto-historians – seem not to have constructed multi-threaded texts like this. So where did he get the idea from? From the model whose influence suffuses his work at every level: the Homeric poems. The recently-discovered verse inscription in praise of his birthplace, Halicarnassus, is right not only to regard him as one of the city's chief glories, but also to encapsulate him neatly as 'the prose Homer'.⁶ In the first four ethnically-orientated books he casts himself in the role of an Odysseus who 'saw the cities of many peoples and got to know their mentality' (*Od.* 1.3); then he shifts imperceptibly into the mode of the *Iliad* poet, recounting the events and celebrating the heroes of a great conflict. His own expressed desire in the proem that great deeds should not be denied their *kleos*, glory, clearly recalls one of the central preoccupations of the *Iliad*. That great poem functioned as the ground bass underlying all Greek cultural expression up to and far beyond Herodotus' own day, and it is the authoritative familiarity of Homer that makes this style both attractive to Herodotus and acceptable to his audience. Homer is regularly appealed to in the *Histories* (e.g. 4.29), and many Homeric features reappear. Most obviously, there is the predominantly Ionic dialect, which enables the historian to generate verbal echoes of epic language, or even cite phrases (e.g. *ou gar ameinson*, 'For such is not the better course', used by Darius to close his speeches at 3.71 and 3.82, recalling Agamemnon at *Il.* 1.217; *epi gēraos oudōi*, 'on death's doorstep', 3.14). To this one may easily add: the overall structure, based on generous expansion of a simple plot-core by the addition of supplementary material; the use of ring-composition which eases the incorporation of digressive material by allowing a graceful exit from and re-entrance into the main narrative flow; characters who perform the role of 'the wise adviser', or 'warner'; and persuasive speeches which draw on earlier history for their argument.⁷

The last item deserves to be particularly highlighted. Many important subsidiary anecdotes in Herodotus are distanced from direct authorial responsibility by being assigned to actors within his story. Often they are embedded in contexts of debate – that is, they are 'paradigmatic', they recommend a course of action appealing positively or negatively to exemplary past events. Take, for example, the speech which the Corinthian Soclees is made to make to the Spartans on the issue of tyranny (dictatorship) at 5.92, offering dark – but entertaining – vignettes of how life in his home city had been conducted under the rule of Cypselus and Periander; or the one which is put into the mouth of the Spartan king Leotychidas (6.86), the cautionary tale he tells to the Athenians about his countryman Glaucus, who once tried to

cheat his way out of a contract. This narrative tactic has a venerable Iliadic pedigree. Phoenix urges Achilles to return to the battle by citing the example of Meleager; Achilles in turn tries to persuade Priam to take food in spite of his grief by pointing to the story of Niobe (*Il.* 9.543–605; 24.602–17). More generally, Diomedes recounts Bellerophon's life-story to Glaucus (*Il.* 6.155–95), and room is made for all kinds of fascinating antiquarian material ('how we used to use chariots in battle in the old days') by assigning them to the greybeard Nestor. The Pyliaian commander recalls, for example, his victory over the Arcadian champion Ereuthalion, who fought not with bow or spear but a huge bronze mace (*Il.* 7.136–56); and one can see this motif of 'the unusual weapon' echoed by Herodotus in his description of Sophanes of Decelea, who ensured that he would hold his ground at the battle of Plataea by fixing himself in place with an iron anchor (9.74).

Many other aspects of epic influence in the way stories are told could be mentioned, such as the glancing affective focus on minor figures who fall in battle, but one passage deserves particular attention. The famous tale of how Cleisthenes the sixth-century ruler of Sicyon sought the most eligible bachelor in Greece as husband for his daughter Agariste is a highlight of Book 6 (126–30). It is conceived in terms of epic style and behaviour throughout, from the catalogue of arriving suitors to the feasting and competitions which follow; it corresponds closely to accounts of the marriage of Helen in 'mythological' sources. Many phrases even fall easily into quasi-epic rhythm. It is a nice question whether this patterning has emerged merely as a result of the shaping of the story by Herodotus and the storytellers who lie behind him (perhaps drawing on a poetic source), or because, as Oswyn Murray has argued, the proceedings were actually orchestrated by the monarch himself so as to conform to heroic best practice; life imitating art.⁸ Either way, the centrality of the epic presentation of life to Greek literature, not least Herodotus, is clear.

Where the stories come from: oral tradition

If Homeric poetry (in the broadest sense, including the so-called 'cyclic' epics) was one of the strong determinants of narrative *form*, what about content? Since Herodotus is the main, and often unique, source for many events of Greek history in the archaic and early classical period – and sometimes even for Near Eastern history – scholars have naturally been very keen to try and track down his likely sources of information, and then to assess its value.⁹ But the historian is not very forthcoming about his informants, and even where he is, we may choose to disbelieve him. At the very outset, he claims to have access to the accounts of Persian *logioi*, 'chroniclers', but we may

suspect an ironic usage which his audience would have been well able to recognise as such (as if Persians would have their own variant accounts of Greek legends!). Throughout the work he is eager to cite *generalised* sources ('the Samians say . . .'), and especially to record alleged disagreements ('the Spartans say . . . but the people of Chios . . . say') and concurrences. This habit led Detlev Fehling to point to inconsistencies and improbabilities in the way Herodotus cited 'sources',¹⁰ but though he may well have been both economical with the truth and a skilled embellisher of it, there can be no question of wholesale invention *e nihilo*.¹¹

Herodotus did not need to invent, because oral tradition supplied him with a vast, if undigested, mass of traditions about the past.¹² This has long been recognised in principle, but historians have usually been too hasty in attempting to identify these oral sources in terms of political ideology and *parti pris*.¹³ What kind of axe was this or that informant busily grinding? Is the account of Agariste's wedding a pro- or anti-Alcmaeonid story?¹⁴ What developments is this or that Delphic oracle attempting to justify, or cover up? When carried out with subtlety such exercises can be very revealing, as in the case of Walter Burkert's brilliant dissection of the different strata of prejudice which are layered into Demaratus' mother's improbable tale of the involvement of the courtyard god Astrabacus in his begetting (6.67–9); or Simon Hornblower's identification of the symbolic role of the territory of Atarneus in the story of the terrible revenge of Hermotimos (8.104–6).¹⁵ But most often all we can be sure of is that most of his source-material *was*, somehow, orally transmitted.

This emerges not so much from his own statements ('the priests told me . . .'), as from the nature of the stories themselves, which bear all the tell-tale signs of narratives which have passed from mouth to ear to mouth again. Wolf Aly showed how many of the typical features of the early modern European folktale, or of *The Thousand Nights and a Night*, can be paralleled in the story-motifs and, more importantly, the organic structures of Herodotean pericopes.¹⁶ One need only compare the elaborate tale of Rhampsinitus and the Thief (2.121) with *Der Meisterdieb*, collected by the Grimm brothers in south Germany in the early nineteenth century.¹⁷ Of course many traditions preserved in Herodotus' text have, or once had, some kind of historical basis, but they have been so thoroughly processed by generations of intermediaries that the specificities of historical contingency have often been eroded away in favour of the generic features which guarantee a story a successful reception. Heroes become more perfectly heroic and villains more villainous still; the rough edges of messy actuality are smoothed into streamlined form. Stories possess, and continue to develop, their own autonomous dynamic.

The point can perhaps be most easily demonstrated by considering how many tales told by Herodotus fall into a series of overlapping, genetically-related sets. This is an obvious feature of the folktale, where we immediately recognise themes like ‘The eventual triumph of the disregarded youngest brother’ or ‘The princess who escapes marriage to the monster at the last minute’, or of the more sophisticated but equally traditional yarns spun by Boccaccio; it is also typical of the dirty joke (one of the last genres of oral literature to survive and flourish), where one can often watch the process of evolution in action, as new variants are spawned by word of mouth or across the Internet.¹⁸ And so in Herodotus we find two stories about a queen called Nitocris who doubled as a hydraulic engineer (1.186, a Babylonian story; 2.100, another in Egypt: Herodotus himself notices the coincidence of names). I have already mentioned the theme of The Wise Adviser, which constitutes a familiar set. One might also cite a ‘Holocaust’ set, in which wicked foreigners burn their enemies alive: 2.111, the Pharaoh called ‘Pharaoh’, and 2.107, Sesostris’ brother (heightened here, because of the double involvement of relatives – first the brother who tries to kill the returning king along with his family, second the wife who advises laying the bodies of two of their children over the flames so that the rest can escape). At 4.164 the perpetrator, Arcesilaus, is a Cyrenean, but more usually the idea is toned down when Greeks are involved: thus Polycrates only threatens immolation (3.45), and Periander burns not the women of Corinth themselves, but only their festive finery (5.92). Or again: many stories re-present the theme of The Awful Dilemma, in which an agonizing choice, like that of Agamemnon at Aulis, is forced upon the protagonist. Sesostris’ wife, who chose to sacrifice two of her six children to save the rest of the family, belongs here (and this makes the point that of course a story may belong to more than one set); so do the wife of Intaphernes, ranking brother over sons and husband (3.119); Arion, ordered to kill himself if he wants burial, or jump overboard and drown (1.24); the thief in the Rhampsinitus story, who is urged by his own brother to kill him for the sake of the family (2.121); and Gyges the faithful servant of Candaules, who must either kill his king or die himself (1.11). Or yet again: stories about *messages* form a further group – tattooed on a slave’s scalp (5.35), concealed in a dead hare (1.123), scratched on the wood of a writing tablet under an innocent coating of smooth wax (7.239), hidden under arrow feathers (8.128), coded as an apparently meaningless *acte gratuit* to baffle the messenger (5.92, the prodigal wheat-wasting), or culminating in a deliberately puzzling threat (6.37). Gifts, too, may function as implied messages.¹⁹ Other sets which have already received attention include those of the King’s Parade and the Philosophical Pharaoh;²⁰ more detailed research, and a synthetic overview, are needed.

Finally under this heading we may consider two particular classes of tale. First, stories are hooked into Herodotus' narrative as appendages not only to people and dynasties, but also *objects*;²¹ and this is a widespread feature of popular storytelling. Physical marvels (*thōmata*) or monuments act as a kind of validating aide-memoire – history frozen in stone or bronze. Indeed, that is often why they were erected in the first place; but the traditions that become attached to them are often not the ones originally intended. Among many examples of mass being converted into energy in this way: one of the minor pyramids at Giza is supposed to have been built by the daughter of the Pharaoh Cheops; he had forced her into a brothel as a money-making scheme, but on her own account she persuaded each of her clients to stump up a block of stone for her memorial (2.126). The statues of 'Cleobis' and 'Biton' at Delphi come with a story (1.31), and so do those of 'Arion' the dolphin-rider at Tainaron (1.24) and of the Persian horseman associated with the dirty trick of Oebares (3.85–8). Peculiarities invite just-so stories. The kneeling statues on Aegina once stood upright, before they were assaulted and fell to their supplicatory posture (5.86); and the missing hands of the attendant statues clustered around the supposed figure of Mycerinus' daughter were explained, says Herodotus, as replicating the real-life mutilation of the girl's treacherous servants (2.131). In both of the last two cases the author distances himself from the versions he gives, but he gives them all the same. He knows how to have his cake and eat it too.

Second, fables. Since Herodotus knows about Aesop 'the storyteller', *logopoios* (2.134), and is fascinated by animal behaviour (cats, camels, winged snakes, gold-digging ants), it may seem surprising that there is only a single explicit fable in the book, the one told by Cyrus to the Ionians and Aeolians at 1.141. In fact the patterns characteristic of fable permeate Herodotean narrative, which has a similarly moralistic thrust; and many individual pericopes show a clear relationship to particular fables. Compare the scene of Cyrus confronting the emissaries of Artembares at the very end of the work (9.122) with the following animal tales, all to be found in Perry's excellent Loeb edition:²² Babrius 24, 61, 85, 93, 100, 128, 142 and (especially) 108. Herodotus' Arion story only really makes sense if the poet's farewell performance is a deliberate strategy to bring about his rescue, as it is at No. 97 in Perry's Appendix (p. 440, The Kid and the Wolf). And if Maeandrius' proposal to introduce *isonomia* at 3.142 recalls Perry No. 348, the wolf's proposal for 'equal shares',²³ the very next chapter, in which Maeandrius lures his rivals into his stronghold (and then falls ill), echoes the scheme of The Sick Lion.²⁴

A complete assemblage of the intricate network of oral narratives which lies behind and beyond the text would obviously tell us a great deal about

the fears and fascinations of fifth-century Greeks – but what does it tell us about Herodotus as a historian? It does not of course mean the dissolution of all ‘history’ into a mere minestrone of popular motifs; people *did* lure their enemies into buildings, lock them in, and incinerate them, and they continue to do so. Such stories may be true. But a proper recognition of their status as constantly recurring allegations in orally-transmitted rumour highlights the need for caution on the part of those who would assert their historicity.

How the stories are re-shaped and placed

If Herodotus had done no more than preserve the multifarious traditions about the past that were current in his day, he would still have performed a valuable service for future historians. In fact he is much more than a hunter-gatherer: with his generally Homeric ideal in mind, he subjects the raw material he has collected to a thoughtful process of selection, adaptation and disposition.

We have already seen that in a ‘normal’ telling of the Arion story, the request to be allowed to sing one last aria was probably motivated by the poet’s wish to appeal for help to his patron god Apollo (as did Croesus on the pyre in the supposed ‘Lydian’ version, 1.87). Why then has Herodotus edited out the god, so that the dolphin suddenly surfaces as if by chance? Because it is one of his self-imposed rules – analogous to Homer’s censoring out of the traditional epic elements of magic, monstrosity and invulnerability from the *Iliad* – that he will not himself be responsible for claims of divine intervention in the human world of the historical, as opposed, roughly, to what we would call the legendary period.²⁵ (His characters and his sources are not, of course, bound by the same constraints – compare the ‘Lydian version’ just mentioned.) We can see a similar principle at work if we examine the story of Gyges, chief of the security staff in the palace of King Candaules of Lydia (1.8–12). Here everything is real-world and rational, in accordance with Herodotus’ practice – simple human foolishness leads to murder and the overthrow of an entire dynasty. Yet in this case we are lucky to have a quite different account in another author, for Plato tells the tale in Book 2 of the *Republic* (359c–360b). Now, instead of a bodyguard, the hero is a shepherd, a mere nobody at the opposite end of the power spectrum from the king; yet with the assistance of a magic ring discovered in an ancient burial, which confers upon him the power of invisibility, he is able to enter the palace unseen, seduce the queen, kill the king, and win power for himself. This is the naïve fantasy world of the folktale, and it is surely Plato’s version which circulated in the wild and needed some inventive tidying-up before it was presentable enough to appear as Herodotean history.

We can perhaps detect the same stripping away of the supernatural in the tale of the birth of Cypselus at 5.92. First time round, the assassins sent to do away with the fateful baby are caught out by their sentimental feelings and withdraw; but once they have steeled themselves to the task, they return to Labda's house determined not to make the same mistake twice. Yet – even though they must know the infant is somewhere on the premises – their search of the house produces no results. Why? 'Cypselus' was etymologised by the Greeks from *kupselē*, a chest or storage-box – hence, supposedly, his dedication of the great chest at Olympia, described by Pausanias (5.17–19). Yet how could the murderers have failed to open every chest in the house in their search for the baby? But *kupselē* is also the Greek for a kind of terracotta bee-hive; and since innumerable tales of ancient hero-figures describe their miraculous preservation from exposure or untimely death by helpful animals,²⁶ it looks as though Georges Roux may have been right to argue that in the pre-Herodotean version the mother, in an extremity of desperation, placed her child where no one would think of looking for it – the bee-hive in the garden.²⁷

Almost as important as the re-casting of his source-material is the way Herodotus distributes it throughout the *Inquiry* so that it may exert maximum effect. Here we should remember that whether or not we can recover (more or less) the smaller recitation-units from which the nine Hellenistic books were made up,²⁸ book-boundaries at all events should also have been *logos*-boundaries; and so we may note how he likes to start and end a performance with a striking story like that of Psammetichus' search for the *Ursprache* (2.2), or the blind slaves of Scythia (4.2–4), or the awesome exploit of the Persian general Zopyrus (3.150–60). Furthermore, we may note how he has composed the stories of Gyges and the wife of Candaules (1.8) and Xerxes and the wife of his brother Masistes (9.108–13) so that they form a responding pair, with many correspondences of phrasing ('Fell in love with his own (!) / Masistes' wife'; 'Since he was doomed to come to a bad end'; 'Master, what is this you are telling me to do?'; 'As time went on'; 'When she found out what he had done, she didn't cry out / didn't get angry'; 'But since he couldn't talk her out of it'). The twin tales are then placed at the extreme ends of his work, to form a kind of ring-composition, a structure which some have thought can be detected in the overall scheme of the *Iliad*, as well as in its subsidiary narratives.²⁹ His idea is presumably to suggest that oriental monarchies are incapable of learning from their mistakes, and are doomed to repeat their history – except that the message here seems to be that what initially occurs as bedroom farce is recapitulated as gruesome tragedy.

With this example in mind, we may be sure that he paid great attention to setting out his stall to best advantage. The Arion story was referred to

above (pp. 131–2) as being apparently ‘arbitrarily placed’; yet however thin the reason given for its introduction, we may speculate that it was important to Herodotus to introduce a tale about divine justice at the earliest possible moment, in order to put down a programmatic marker for the course of the whole *Inquiry*. If that is so, and bearing in mind the symmetrical disposition of the two stories about oriental wives, it may be that the tale of Euenius the prophet, which holds up the action just before the final battle of Mycale (9.92–6), was intended to act as a matching element at the end of the work; it too concerns divine correction of human injustice.³⁰ Placing is not just done for effect, placing helps to *determine* effect.

*

All historiography – even when we are following, or being led along, a main narrative line – is ultimately storytelling, the construction of a text targeted at engaging and persuading real or imaginary, present or future, listeners or readers (who include, of course, the author him- or herself in internalised receptive rather than actively suasive mode). But Herodotus sparkles with so many facets, with what the Greeks called *poikilia*, that he is a special case. The total effect is kaleidoscopic; it is not so much the individual fragments as the patterns they form in combination which are so satisfying. Recurring *Leitmotive* mean that, as one story recalls another, the book becomes more than the sum of its parts and complex, resonating harmonics are set up. Once we realise how this intricate ensemble works, we can even ask seemingly impossible questions which go beyond the text, like (3.42): Did the fisherman who brought his prize catch as a present for Polycrates enjoy the dinner to which the grateful tyrant invited him? Herodotus doesn’t tell us, but a reading of the parallel story of the feast to which Astyages invited Harpagus (1.118–19) allows us to deduce the ending of the unfinished example from the complete one. The fateful baby Cyrus was supposed to have been lost and gone forever, and so was the ring which was found in the fish’s belly. The second king will have been no more pleased than the first to find that what he had tried to throw away turned out to be a boomerang. No, it can not have been a happy meal.³¹

FURTHER READING

O. Murray’s 1987 essay ‘Herodotus and Oral History’, reviewing the sources question in the light of research by Vansina and Finnegan into communal memory in Africa, is now more accessibly reprinted, with minor additions (Murray 2001a). Gray (2002) 291–317 provides a rich selection of examples with thoughtful analysis. Kazazis (1978) shows how a limited stock of

strategies can be creatively re-shuffled to produce elaborate realisations at the level of the individual tale. Two useful studies of story-sets (of the kind I have suggested, above p. 138, we need more of), are Flory (1978b) and Stern (1991).

Finally, there are many lessons, both comparative and contrastive, to be learnt from other Near Eastern narrative texts. The historical books of the Bible (for which see Alter [1981]) suggest many tangents to Herodotus' work, and both Hornblower (2003) and I myself (Griffiths [1987]) have found parallels in the Joseph saga. It is worth singling out the tale of the Assyrian vizier Ahiqar, a story which has a rich medieval tradition (see Conybeare et al. [1898]; cf. Charles [1913]), and is proved by an Aramaic papyrus to go back in some form to Herodotus' own time (Cowley [1923]); it gives some idea of the character of the international Eastern Mediterranean tradition which Herodotus both drew on and contributed to.

NOTES

1. What Peter Wiseman has dubbed 'spurious *akribeia*': Wiseman (1983) 21.
2. That is, I shall not deal here with more complex concatenations like the accounts of the careers of Croesus, Polycrates or Miltiades.
3. Use of the word 'drama' is not entirely casual, for the narratives of Croesus, Atys and Adrastus (1.34–45) and Periander and Lycophron (3.50–53) show strong influence from Attic tragedy; see Griffin in this volume. These extended scenes have sometimes been called 'novellae' – stories which are told in such detail that they temporarily hold centre-stage in their own right (compare too the long account of Rhampsinitus and the Thief, 2.121).
4. Jacoby, *RE* col. 380: 'Man kann wohl ohne Übertreibung sagen: Herodots ganze Kunst, seinen Stoff zu disponieren, besteht in der Art, wie und wo er Exkurse anbringen kann.' Compare Griffin in this volume, n. 29.
5. 'Tibull ist ein Ideenflüchtiger, und als solcher gehört er zu den Menschen mit mangelhafter zerebraler Sekundär-Funktion' (van Wageningen [1913] 355, categorising him according to the system of Otto Gross).
6. See Lloyd-Jones (1999); verse 43 runs *Hērodoton ton pezon en historiaisin Homēron*.
7. For more on Herodotus and Homer see Marincola in this volume; for speeches see also Pelling.
8. Murray (1993) 212–13: 'everything that is known of the life style of the aristocracy suggests that it is true'.
9. For a sensitive and circumspect treatment of this question see Hornblower (2002), concluding with a comparison with Thucydides: 'Herodotus' cheerful march across the intellectual disciplines takes him across a wider territory and his footprints are that much harder to trace.'
10. Fehling (1989).
11. Even if Penguin's first, wartime edition of Herodotus (Harmondsworth 1941) did appear in the series 'Fiction'.

12. What I have elsewhere (Griffiths [2001a]) called the 'hintertext'. On oral tradition in Herodotus see Luraghi in this volume.
13. Thus for a reductionist like Oost (1972) Periander's bonfire of the vanities (5.92) is a transformed folk memory of Corinthian sumptuary legislation.
14. See Thomas (1989) 266–7; Griffiths (2001b) 167–8.
15. Burkert (1965); Hornblower (2003).
16. Aly (1921/1969).
17. Fehling (1972) has argued that where there are striking similarities between ancient and modern *Märchen* this is to be explained as the result of reintroduction into popular tradition of stories known from books. This possibility can and should not be completely excluded, but it will not begin to account for the deep and pervasive nature of the cross-correspondences, which while remaining impressive show just the kind of mutations – those enabling a folktale to continue functioning in a Christian culture, for example – that one would expect after a period of many centuries of oral transmission.
18. Only the successful mutations survive. Compare the hero of Saki's short story *The Seventh Pullet* (Saki [1914]), who finds to his surprise that his boastful but wholly invented anecdote is actually winning acceptance: 'Unconsciously all sorts of little details and improvements began to suggest themselves.'
19. Gould (1989) 57; all three of his examples are ominous (4.131; 3.21; 4.162).
20. Griffiths (2001b) and Christ (1994), respectively.
21. See Dewald (1993).
22. Perry (1965).
23. So Detienne and Svenbro (1989) 150–2.
24. Babrius 103, cf. 95, 97; Phaedrus 4.2, Appendix 389.
25. For the divine in Herodotus see Scullion in this volume.
26. See Binder (1964).
27. Roux (1963). Compare Theocritus 7.78–82, Comatas hidden from the wicked king in a box and fed by the bees on honeycomb. More demystification at Hdt. 1.110 (cf. 122): Cyrus was not suckled in the wild by a bitch, but brought up by a woman whose name means 'Bitch' in Persian.
28. An attempt was made by Cagnazzi (1975).
29. For an extreme statement of the case see Whitman (1958), especially the final chart.
30. See further Griffiths (1999).
31. This bit of reconstructive surgery poses a further question: *why* did Herodotus choose not to finish the story? Partly because here the focus is firmly on Polycrates, while in Book 1 Astyages and Harpagus were equally interesting characters; but also because Herodotus normally draws back from ascribing to Greeks, even Greek tyrants, the full gamut of cruel behaviour which orientals are allowed to indulge in. Note also that here Polycrates delivered the original invitation in good faith and with the best of intentions, not as a deceptive lure. So once more the point about sets – not just that they exist, but that it's the *use* of them which is important – applies.



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THE MOTIF OF THE “MUTILATED HERO” IN HERODOTUS

D. FELTON

ALTHOUGH HERODOTUS PROVIDES many detailed descriptions within his *Histories*—descriptions of outfitted troops, of military strategies, of small skirmishes and major battles, of political intrigues, of foreign customs, of man-made structures, of the natural world—he rarely mentions the specific wounds received by individual characters over the course of his narrative, despite the many contexts in which wounds are given and received. Herodotus names various prominent characters killed in battle but without explaining specifically how they died—for example, the war archon Callimachus at Marathon, the Spartan king Leonidas at Thermopylae, and the Persian commander Mardonius at Plataea. Exceptions include the Athenian Cynegirus, son of Euphorion (and brother of Aeschylus), killed in the battle of Marathon after his hand was severed as he scaled a Persian ship (6.114.1),¹ and the Persian cavalry commander Masistius, killed Iliadic-style by a blow through his eye during preliminary fighting at Plataea (9.22.2).² Quite possibly Herodotus did not know exactly how various notable men died; some scholars suggest that the historian knew but did not consider such details important.³ Consequently, when Herodotus takes the time to describe specific wounds, we ought to ask why. Given the rarity of specified wounds in Herodotus’ narrative, it is notable that no fewer than four well-known characters sustain injuries to their thighs: the Persian king Cambyses, Histiaeus of Miletus, Cleomenes of Sparta, and Miltiades of Athens. Of these, the only widely discussed case is that of Cambyses, because his injury intentionally mirrors the wound he inflicted on the sacred Apis bull. All four characters die not long after incurring their thigh wounds. This paper explores the likelihood that, in attributing thigh wounds to the aforementioned characters, who may not in reality have suffered these particular wounds, Herodotus was working with a traditional folkloric motif referred to as the “mutilated hero.”

Classical scholars are generally aware of the trope that in literature from around the world thigh wounds are often euphemistic for castration, or at least

I would like to thank Emily Baragwanath, Adrienne Mayor, and Melissa Mueller for their comments and criticisms during the development and writing stages of this paper.

¹This is the only specific wound Herodotus mentions in his entire account of Marathon. Epizelus’ sudden, inexplicable blindness cannot be considered a wound, as he receives no blow of any kind (6.117.2).

²Cf. *Il.* 14.493–499, where the Greek soldier Peneleos kills the Trojan Ilioneus with a spear thrust through his eye. Herodotus also specifies that Masistius’ horse was wounded, struck by an arrow (9.22.1). For the battle of Thermopylae, Herodotus mentions *not one single wound*, instead generalizing: some men fall into the sea, others are trampled to death, etc. (Hdt. 7.210–212, 218–229, esp. 7.223).

³Salazar 2000: 170. Herodotus, however, frequently describes specific mutilations. See, for example, Maxwell-Stuart 1976: 357.

for impotence.⁴ But classicists have not noted how thigh wounds frequently symbolize not only physical impotence but political or spiritual impotence, and how such wounds also represent a temporary or permanent loss of heroic status for the wounded individual as well as a crisis for the group of people represented by that individual. This association apparently has its roots in a belief, held by many cultures, that semen was produced in several places in the body, including in the marrow of the thigh bone, and the thighs' proximity to the testicles resulted in a close association that was nearly an interchange between the thighs and the male genitalia. Consequently, any kind of wound to the thigh, whether a wrenching, piercing, crushing, or other injury or mutilation, could represent a blow to a man's physical and spiritual virility. Because a high number of heroic characters in world literature suffer thigh wounds that symbolize such weakness, folklorists term this association the motif of the "mutilated hero."⁵ For the purpose of definition, it is also important to note that intentional self-mutilation as well as accidental wounding weigh equally for this motif; incidents of self-mutilation of the thigh suggest more self-awareness of one's failings as a man and/or as a leader.⁶ The Greeks shared in this cultural association of the thighs with organs of regeneration. Hence, Zeus can incubate the infant Dionysus in his thigh, which becomes the male equivalent of the womb.⁷ Aristotle was among those who believed that veins ran from the genitals through the thigh to the heel, and

⁴Dundes 1962: 108. Cf. Burkert 1985 (1977): 165. The most complete treatment of symbolic thigh wounds in literature is by Hays (1971), who notes that "a disproportionate number of figures in Greek mythology were either lame, like Hephaestus and Oedipus, or met death through a leg wound, as did Achilles, Paris, Cheiron, and Eurydice" (3). Hays focuses on modern literature, however, so his discussion of characters from classical antiquity is limited and lacking detail. See also Fledderus 1997.

⁵Though generally referred to as a "motif," it has not been formally incorporated in specific motif indexes (such as Uther 2004).

⁶Jobs 1961: 1556; also de Vries 1973: 461. This motif is most famously exemplified in the character of the Fisher King from the cycle of Grail legends. Other characters in the Grail cycle receive thigh wounds at moments of spiritual crisis (Sir Perceval and Sir Lancelot, for example). See Mantarrasso 1969: 12; also Hays 1971: 17–21, 64–66. Some Grail scholars connect the Fisher King with the biblical Jacob (e.g., Holmes and Klenke 1959: 102–103; Jung and von Franz 1960: 211) because an example of the connection between a thigh wound and a loss of virility appears in the story of Jacob and the angel (*Genesis* 32:24–32; see also Hays 1971: 24). Cf. Samson, who smites the Philistines "hip and thigh" (*Judges* 15:8), and Burkert on the Hebrew idiom "sprung from my thigh" meaning "my son" (1985 [1977]: 413). In the Old Testament swearing with one's hand placed "under the thigh" means swearing by one's progeny, a connection reflected in Indo-European examples as well, such as the etymology of *testis* including both "testicle" and "testimony" (see, e.g., de Vries 1973: 461; Hays 1971: 11–12).

⁷Onians (1951: 182–185) also notes the significance of "smiting" one's thigh. See also Hays 1971: 11–14, and Eur. *Bacch.* 96 (κατὰ μηρῶ), where the chorus of devout Bacchae describe the birth of Dionysus from Zeus' thigh. For an in-depth discussion, see Leitao 2012: 58–99, esp. 93–94. Lucian mocks the "pregnant male" myth in *Ver. hist.* 1.22 (see also Georgiadou and Larmour 1998: 123–131). On ancient medical theories about semen, see Daniels 2006: 34; Dean-Jones 1991: 128; and Giacomelli 1980: 12–13. Such theories were partially attempts to explain the birth of Athena from Zeus' head, but wounds to the head have not carried the same symbolic references to impotence and castration as have thigh wounds. See also Leitao 2012: 108–113, 153–156, and 166–175.

that the testes were not essential, so that castration, by preventing the emission of semen, preserved it in the body.⁸ Thus, the connection between lameness and barrenness appears frequently in Greek literature. Any wound that resulted in lameness might represent a lack of virility and a resulting literal or metaphorical barrenness, particularly if the character in question was a hero. Oedipus, for example, lamed because of his mutilated feet, committed acts that resulted in the drought at Thebes, giving us the motif of barren lands related to an unfit king—as in the later Arthurian Grail cycle, well known for its use of thigh wounds as symbolic of impotence and castration both physical and spiritual.⁹

In Greek and Roman literature, the connection between impotence or castration and wounds in the thigh or groin is evident early on, particularly in myths involving the goddess Aphrodite who, according to Hesiod, arose from foam surrounding the severed genitals of Ouranos. Aphrodite is associated with several instances of lameness, thigh wounds, and other metaphors for impotence, including her relationships with Hephaestus, Adonis, and Anchises.¹⁰ The myth of Adonis, fatally wounded in the thigh during a boar hunt, associates Aphrodite not only with thigh wounds and impotence, but with the cycle of life, death, and rebirth connected with vegetation and the change of seasons.¹¹ Aphrodite's affair with the mortal Anchises was also disastrous.¹²

⁸ See Hays 1971: 15–16.

⁹ See above, 48, n. 6. A familiar example of the connection between sexual transgression, lameness, and barrenness in classical literature appears in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, particularly in lines 25–27 (see also Slattery 2000: 52–54; Hays 1971: 64). Cf. the myth of the Mysian king Telephus (Apollod. *Bib.* 2.54 and *Epit.* 3.17–20; Gantz 1993: 23). See also Majno 1975: 371; Vernant 1982: 19–25; and Ginzburg 1991: 226–238.

¹⁰ See, for example, *Theogony* 570–572, 927–929, 945–946. The connection between Aphrodite, female sexuality, and impotence appears in several myths beside that of Hesiod. She was married to (and cuckolded) Hephaestus, the lame god, whose crippled state suggests impotence—at least regarding his union with Aphrodite. Hephaestus and Aphrodite had no children together, though Hephaestus did father several sons by other consorts and his semen produced Erichthonius when he tried to rape Athena. In short, the god was impotent only in his relationship with Aphrodite.

¹¹ See, for example, *Ov. Met.* 10.519–559 and 708–739. Other characters from classical myth wounded in boar hunts include Ankaïos (Philostr. *Imag.* 15), Eurytides (*Ov. Met.* 8.371), and Odysseus (*Od.* 19.449–450). Rubin and Sale (1983) consider the young Odysseus' wound as a mark of valor, not weakness, but the scar from this wound later gives Odysseus away to Eurykleia. In this context the wound might be seen as a liability, but since the word "thigh" is not used to describe Odysseus' wound, it is also possible that the poet intentionally wanted to avoid describing a thigh wound precisely because of its symbolic connection with impotence. The phrase in the *Od.* is γουὺνδς ὕπερ (*Od.* 19.450), whereas in all the other cases under discussion here the Greek μηρός or the Latin *femur* is used (but see also Onians 1951: 174–186 and Hays 1971: 16–17 on the relationship of knees to thighs in this context; similarly, the Homeric loosening of the knees in descriptions of sex and of dying). Cf. Slattery 2000: 21–49. Cybele, Aphrodite's eastern counterpart, causes the self-castration of Attis (e.g., Cat. 63; cf. Weston 1920: 48; Gillis 1983: 90, n. 8). Burkert (1972: 160) remarks, "The myths tell over and over of the favorite of the Great Mother being wounded in the thigh." See also Weston 1920: 48 for associations between the Fisher King, the cult of Adonis, and the change of seasons.

¹² In the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* Anchises fears he will be left impotent (189–190). In line 188 Anchises asks Aphrodite not to leave him living ἀμειννὸν among men; Giacomelli (1980: 16),

The goddess warns him not to boast about the union, but he evidently cannot restrain himself from doing so, as sources outside the *Homeric Hymn* tell us that Zeus strikes Anchises in the thigh with a thunderbolt, crippling him for life.¹³ Despite a general awareness among classicists of the connection between thigh wounds (and lameness in general) and impotence in such myths, and despite the fact that some ancient authors explicitly draw a connection between the thighs and male genitalia,¹⁴ these wounds are rarely analyzed in the context of classical literature. For mythological works, mainly epic poems including Homer's *Iliad* and Vergil's *Aeneid*, a few studies have discussed the symbolic meaning of thigh wounds, particularly from a Freudian perspective.¹⁵ Such wounds have also been noted as "traditional in epic."¹⁶ But in historiographical rather than mythographical works, in this case Herodotus' *Histories*, the symbolic function of thigh wounds in the narrative has been ignored apart from the story of Cambyses and the Apis bull in Book 3. Yet, in Book 6 of Herodotus three historical figures, Histiaeus, Cleomenes, and Miltiades, receive thigh wounds which, in their contexts, not only indicate a literal, physical injury, but also presage the political downfall of these men, who had at various points in their careers been viewed as strong leaders.

In examining how significant these particular thigh wounds are, we might first note that Greek historical writing apart from Herodotus provides several examples of thigh wounds inflicted upon well-known characters. The thigh wound forms a recurrent theme in the works of Ctesias of Cnidus, the Greek doctor who, in the late fifth century B.C.E., wrote a history of Persia: Cyrus the Great, Cambyses, and Megabyzus (all main characters) are wounded in the thigh.¹⁷ Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* describes how Alexander the Great, fighting at Issus, suffered a sword wound in the thigh, though the injury was not serious

in her extended discussion of μένος, argues that in doing so Anchises is "voicing a fear of lifelong impotence."

¹³The story may have been told in the *Iliupersis* of Arktinos, according to Smith (1981: ad 129) but the evidence is scanty. The earliest surviving source to say that Anchises was struck by lightning is Sophocles, and Vergil ascribes Anchises' physical disability to a thunderbolt from Zeus (*Aen.* 2.648–649). Hyginus is the first extant source to specify the connection between the thunderbolt and Anchises' boast about having had sex with Aphrodite (Gantz 1993: 102).

¹⁴For example, Artem. 1.46; see also Gillis 1983: 90.

¹⁵For example, Gillis 1983: esp. 90. *Femur* is the usual Latin word for "thigh," and, as Adams (1982) points out, "In Classical Latin the thighs are regarded as a sexually significant part, in that the space between them was the site of the sexual organs." Christian Latin occasionally uses *femur* to express "the organs of procreation" (51).

¹⁶See Harrison 1991: 162, on *Aen.* 10.343–344; he does not, however, discuss why thigh wounds are traditional in epic or what their significance might be. Thigh wounds are also frequent in Icelandic sagas, where they represent blows to a man's virility and are even seen as insults equivalent to saying a man is effeminate (e.g., *Grettir's Saga* chapters 60 and 81–82 and *Gísli Saga Súrssonar* chapter 19 = http://sagadb.org/grettis_saga.en and http://www.sagadb.org/gisla_saga_surssonar.en, respectively).

¹⁷Weerdenberg 1985: 467.

(20.4–5),¹⁸ and Salazar examines the importance of scenes of wounding in the narratives about Alexander both as a historical figure and as a literary creation.¹⁹ In fiction and non-fiction it is nearly always kings and other persons of high status (such as generals) who receive thigh wounds. Often, as with Cambyeses, these wounds precede their political downfall if the wound is serious enough and causes disability or illness, or eventually results in death. Only infrequently do we hear of minor characters wounded in the thigh, which is highly unusual given the hundreds of various wounds described in Greek and Roman historiography.²⁰

This is not to suggest that every single incidence of a thigh wound is a literary symbol for castration or impotence, physical or metaphorical.²¹ Some of the thigh wounds described in historical literature were probably genuine, such as that of Cambyeses.²² Some of these historically documented wounds can be attributed to the types of protective clothing men wore in battle in antiquity. Leg armor generally consisted of greaves covering the shins and calves, and corselets extending down from the torso, with the thighs left largely unprotected so as to allow free movement.²³ Illustrating this is an anecdote from Quintilian: discussing the use of irony, he says, "A witness asserted that the accused attempted to wound him in the thigh . . . whereupon Caesar replied, 'What else *could* he have done, when you had a helmet and breastplate?'" (*Quid enim faceret, inquit, cum tu galeam et lorica[m] haberes?*, 6.3.91). In many descriptions of thigh wounds, however, particularly those involving heroes, the narratives specify that the arrow or spear penetrated both shield and corselet before hitting the thigh,²⁴ so considerations of armor do not sufficiently explain the patterns present in literature.

¹⁸ Cf. Arrian 2.12.1; Hammond 1993: 37.

¹⁹ See Salazar 2000: 184–208; on the medical and thematic aspects of Alexander's thigh wound in particular, 193–194.

²⁰ Even in epic poetry it is rare to hear of a minor character receiving a thigh wound, at least until Nonnos' *Dionysiaca* (e.g., 29.75–77, 30.45–47, 32.202–205). Minor characters in the *Iliad* wounded in the thigh include Eurypylos (11.844), Amphiclus (16.313–16), and Areilycus (16.308). Regarding Eurypylos, Salazar (2000: 155) suggests that he has been given characteristics usually ascribed to major heroes "in order to make him significant enough for his role." Holmes (2007: 68) comments of Eurypylos that "his wound signals his own failure as one of the *aristoi* to protect the people," though she does not note the physical location of his wound.

²¹ And not every type of wound symbolizes castration, though there are certainly other wounds and mutilations that can be interpreted as such. Eye-gouging, for example (particularly self-inflicted eye-gouging) has been connected with sexual guilt and seen as metaphorical for castration, as in the case of Oedipus.

²² See below, 53, n. 36.

²³ See Salazar 2000: 231. The neck, which was also unguarded between the helmet and shield, was a much more frequent site of fatal wounds in battle, particularly decapitation. Achilles kills Hector with a fatal blow to the throat; there may be sexual undertones in this particular penetration. Hector's family line, like that of most other heroes mentioned here, comes to an end when Neoptolemus kills Astyanax. See below, 53, n. 34.

²⁴ See, for example, Hdt. 9.22.2. This situation is especially true in epic, for example, Menelaus wounded at *Il.* 4.128–140; Mezentius wounded at *Aen.* 10.785–786; Turnus wounded at *Aen.* 12.925.

Another practical consideration concerns the medical aspects of thigh wounds. A person could bleed out quickly if the femoral artery were severed, but speedy deaths from thigh wounds are rare in Greek and Roman literature.²⁵ Sometimes deep thigh wounds become seriously infected, causing death. Relatively recent evidence suggests, for example, that King Tutankhamun died from an infection acquired when he broke his left thigh severely enough for the bone to puncture the skin.²⁶ Sir Philip Sidney, the renowned British poet, died of an infected thigh wound three weeks after being shot in the thigh during combat.²⁷ But the deadly gangrenous infections that sometimes accompany thigh wounds in major historical figures such as Cambyses and Miltiades (as discussed below, 53–54 and 57–58) should be considered relatively unusual: ancient medical treatises tell us that the majority of patients suffering gangrene from such wounds survived.²⁸ Salazar, in her discussion of “wounding as a code,” suggests that detailed scenes of wounding, even when based on historical events, were intentionally rendered so as to represent a “heroic ideal.”²⁹ In short, practical considerations cannot fully explain the patterns apparent in Greek and Roman literature, and it is notable that in Herodotus’ *Histories* thigh wounds, which are never *immediately* fatal (unlike Masistes’ eye wound, for example), do not bode well for their recipients.³⁰

An early signal that Herodotus considers the thigh potentially symbolic of weakness comes at 1.191.4, where Cyrus the Great lessens the flow of the Euphrates river to make it fordable. At its new, lower height, it is deep enough to reach only to the middle of a man’s thigh (ἀνδρὶ ἐς μέσον μηρὸν μάλιστά κη). This connection between the thighs and a loss of potency becomes more explicit in the first and most detailed incidence of a foreboding thigh wound in Herodotus’ text, which appears in his story of Cambyses and the Apis bull. Cambyses was never considered particularly rational, but the Egyptians believed that his total loss of sanity began with his sacrilegious stabbing of the sacred

Aeneas’ own wound (12.319–323) is generally considered to have been in the thigh, on which see Gillis 1983: *passim*; Salazar 2000: 223; Greenwood 1989; Noonan 1997; and Simms 2005, among others.

²⁵ See Saunders 1999: 359–602, citing even ancient skepticism about the “sudden deaths” in Homer, such as Amphiclus’ thigh wound (*Il.* 16.313–16). Areilycus (*Il.* 16.308), too, dies very quickly from his thigh wound.

²⁶ See Lovgren 2006. Tutankhamun died ca 1323 B.C.E.

²⁷ At the Battle of Zutphen, Netherlands, 1586. Apparently Sidney was not wearing his cuisses (plate thigh defenses); the unfortunate modern fashion at the time was to discard non-essential armor components on the battlefield, according to Thom Richardson, Keeper of Armour and Oriental Collections, Royal Armouries, Leeds, UK (personal correspondence, 8/5/13).

²⁸ For example, the Hippocratic *On Joints* (69) and *On Fractures* (19), which describe how a fracture of the thigh bone can cause abscesses and necrosis if not properly treated. But see Salazar 2000: 30–34; also Majno 1975: 152 and 400 (the latter analyzing a case history from Galen about a gladiator wounded in the thigh).

²⁹ Salazar 2000: 126.

³⁰ Vernant (1982: 26–34) discusses the significance of lameness in relationship to bad rulers in Herodotus, but does not discuss thigh wounds.

bull.³¹ He aimed for its belly but missed, instead striking it in the thigh (θέλων τύψαι τὴν γαστέρα τοῦ Ἄπιος παῖει τὸν μηρόν, 3.29.1); it subsequently died slowly and painfully from the wound (πεπληγμένος τὸν μηρόν ἔφθινε ἐν τῷ ἱρῷ κατακείμενος, 3.29.3). Shortly after this Cambyses has the prophetic dream that ultimately leads to his downfall: he misinterprets the Smerdis of his dream to be his brother rather than the one of the Magi who threatens his power, and has his brother killed on the basis of this misinterpretation.³² Just after Cambyses realizes that he has murdered the wrong Smerdis, he accidentally stabs himself in the thigh with his own sword (γυμνωθὲν δὲ τὸ ξίφος παῖει τὸν μηρόν, 3.63.3), in the exact same spot in which he had stabbed the Apis bull. Notably, as Gillis observes, the bull is “a prime symbol of masculine vigor and sexual potency” in many cultures, including ancient Greece and Rome.³³ Consequently, both this wound and Herodotus’ phrasing not only mirror Cambyses’s attack on the Apis but also, through Cambyses’ implied impotence (as a man, as a leader), herald his own demise: he soon dies of gangrene (μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ὡς ἐσφακέλισέ τε τὸ ὀστέον καὶ ὁ μηρὸς τάχιστα ἐσάπη, 3.66.2).³⁴ Cambyses’ death and the resultant succession crisis lead to an Egyptian revolt.

Flower points to a discrepancy between Herodotus’ account of this event and actual epigraphical evidence. Herodotus states that Cambyses’ worst transgression was the fatal wounding of the sacred Apis bull, and that the priests buried the bull in secret from Cambyses. But the epitaph on the grave stele and inscription on the sarcophagus of this very Apis survive and record that Cambyses himself buried the bull with elaborate funeral rites. Flower cautions that Herodotus’ narrative is thus hardly a factual record of early Persian history.³⁵ Most readers probably take Herodotus with a grain of salt in any case, but, regarding the death of Cambyses, we should also note that the Bisitun inscription set up by Darius says that his predecessor “died his own death,” which is ambiguous.³⁶

³¹ Cambyses’ mad behavior included burning the corpse of the Egyptian king Amasis, “committing incest with his sister, shooting the son of a loyal servant through the heart, and mocking and even burning cult statues at Memphis in Egypt” (Rood 2006: 298–299). See also Pafford 2011: 26, on possible causes of Cambyses’ madness, and cf. below, 55, n. 44.

³² Soon after this, Cambyses beats his pregnant sister/wife to death. Herodotus (3.31–32) notes that it was never Persian custom for siblings to marry, thus presenting Cambyses’ marriage as an instance of sexual transgression. The sister miscarried before she died because Cambyses kicked her womb, just as he had aimed for the Apis bull’s stomach (γαστήρ in both instances).

³³ Gillis 1983: 92–94.

³⁴ Cambyses dies with no offspring to continue his line (ἄπαιδα δὲ τὸ παράπαν ἔόντα ἔρσενος καὶ θήλεος γόνου, 3.66.2). This is frequently a notable consequence of thigh wounds in epic (e.g., *Aen.* 10.814–880, on the deaths of Lausus and Mezentius, and *Aen.* 12.923–938, on the death of Turnus; see Thome 1979: 251–529 and Gillis 1983: 98 on the significance of Turnus’ dying unmarried).

³⁵ Flower 2006: 279–280.

³⁶ According to Asheri *et al.* (2007: 462), this expression has often been understood to mean suicide, but today it is generally believed that the Persian text does not in any way specify the manner of Cambyses’ death. It seems mainly to indicate that the king was not killed by someone else, i.e., assassinated.

It may suggest that the king committed suicide, or that he accidentally caused his own fatal wound, as is also indicated by Ctesias, who states that Cambyses wounded his thigh with his own dagger while cutting a piece of wood.³⁷ So, rather than concluding that Herodotus was “misled by his Egyptian sources,” as Flower does,³⁸ we can reasonably surmise that Herodotus was manipulating the the story of Cambyses, the Apis bull, and their respective deaths to fit a literary motif that would resonate with his audience.

In Book 6 the motif of the mutilated hero also figures prominently, but the three thigh wounds here have gone almost entirely unnoticed. The first thigh wound in Book 6 is inflicted on Histiaeus, one-time ruler of Miletus, who, along with Aristagoras, was one of the original instigators of the Ionian revolt. The revolt was never especially well organized, and after the death of Aristagoras became even more chaotic. Histiaeus returns to Miletus too late to regain control, and is wounded in the thigh by a Milesian when he attempts to take the town by force (τιτρώσκεται τὸν μηρὸν, 6.5.2). Although Histiaeus survives the injury and settles for conquering Chios, the Persians capture him when he returns to the mainland. They do not simply kill him: they impale him, decapitate him, and ship his mummified head to Darius (6.30.1).³⁹ This is not only the end of Histiaeus, but also of the revolt he began, as the Persians soon regain control of the area.⁴⁰ As noted earlier, Herodotus almost never specifies the types of wounds men receive in fighting (or in other actions), so the fact that he intentionally describes Histiaeus as being wounded in the thigh helps to confirm the importance of the motif, and, as with Cambyses’ death, suggests that a wound in the thigh also signals a crisis for the people represented by the wounded individual.

In her discussion of the Ionian revolt, Sara Forsdyke remarks that Herodotus’ account of Histiaeus’ actions is “somewhat puzzling,” given that these actions do not significantly contribute to the outcome of events.⁴¹ She says that Histi-

³⁷Ctesias, *FGH* 688F13 (14); Asheri *et al.* 2007: 649; see also Griffiths (1988: 61), who suggests that this story may have influenced Herodotus’ account of Cleomenes’ death.

³⁸Flower 2006: 280.

³⁹The impaling of Histiaeus, not long after he is wounded in the thigh, may also have sexual connotations. I hesitate to read too much into this, however, because impaling, like mutilation, was a common method of Persian punishment. The mutilation sometimes involved cutting off various extremities while the victim was still alive: see, for example, Asheri *et al.* 2007: 466. Scott (2005: 152) notes that “The reference to τὸ σῶμα might suggest that Histiaeus was dead when strung up (like Polycrates at 3.125.3),” citing also those instances in Herodotus where characters were impaled alive. In Homeric society, mutilation was the punishment for sexual misdemeanours; removal of the nose was sometimes an intentional symbol of castration (Adams 1980: 59–60). There is, however, a difference between intentional mutilation to symbolize castration and the apparently accidental thigh wounds under discussion here as a literary device in Herodotus (though see Cleomenes’ intentionally self-inflicted wound, below, 55–56).

⁴⁰Chapman (1972), though discussing Histiaeus’ failure at Miletus, does not mention the wound.

⁴¹Forsdyke 2002: 530. Scott (2005: 63) concurs, noting that Histiaeus “does nothing to lead the revolt or to assist the Ionians.”

aeus’ cleverness is the only real consistency in the narratives, and suggests that Herodotus’ account derives from popular traditions that mainly illustrated Greek cleverness.⁴² Scott adds to this argument by suggesting that Herodotus relied on a biographical tradition about Histiaeus that most likely had a “considerable overlay of folklore” and that portrayed him as “an Odysseus-like twister.”⁴³ Scott does not mention Histiaeus’ wound, however, even though it may fit in with folkloric tradition. But since Herodotus describes Histiaeus’ specific thigh wound as well as his later mutilation at the hands of the Persians, Herodotus is quite likely playing with the motif of the “mutilated hero” in this instance, in part to show how far Histiaeus has fallen from his previous position of power and privilege.

The second thigh wound in Book 6 is that of the Spartan king Cleomenes, who, like Cambyses, was never considered entirely sane.⁴⁴ Cleomenes flees Sparta when his plots against Demaratus, the other Spartan king, are exposed, but when he starts enlisting the Arcadians for an attack on Sparta the Spartans recall him. By this time Cleomenes has gone completely out of his mind and wanders around jabbing people in the face with his staff (6.75.2, perhaps a phallic symbol in this context). The Spartans throw him in jail, where he procures a knife and slices himself to ribbons, from his legs to his belly.⁴⁵ Herodotus places a small but specific emphasis on the thighs, as Cleomenes cuts himself “from his calves to his thighs and from his thighs to his hips and sides, until he reached his belly” (ἐκ τῶν κνημέων ἐς τοὺς μηρούς, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μηρῶν ἕς τε τὰ ἰσχία καὶ τὰς λαπάρας, ἐς δὲ τὴν γαστέρα ἀπῴκετο, 6.75.3).⁴⁶ Like the insane Cambyses, Cleomenes inflicts the fatal wound upon himself, though in this case intentionally rather than accidentally.⁴⁷

⁴² See, for example, Hdt. 5.35.3, 5.106–107, and 6.3 (Forsdyke 2002: 530–531).

⁴³ Scott (2005: 63; cf. 73), notes that in the absence of any corroborating evidence, “It is difficult to decide how much historicity there is behind the folklore” even in the case of a relatively well-known historical figure such as Histiaeus.

⁴⁴ Pafford (2011: 27) discusses the similarities between the cases of Cambyses and Cleomenes: both are at first effective but ruthless leaders who descend into madness, committing acts of impiety. See Griffiths 1988: 51 for a list of the various theories put forth to explain Cleomenes’ madness (including alcoholism, cannabis, and paranoid schizophrenia), and 70–72 for the many parallels between Cleomenes and Cambyses.

⁴⁵ According to Strong (1998: 26), “major self-mutilation” that includes extreme acts of cutting (such as self-castration) is “most often the result of psychosis or acute intoxication” and is frequently connected to the religious concept of atonement through suffering (29). Moreover, “cutting bouts are generally precipitated by an experience—real or perceived—of loss or abandonment” (55). All of this applies to Cleomenes’ mental state, though he skips the initial stages of shallow cutting and goes directly to fatal deep cuts.

⁴⁶ The ἰσχία are, specifically, the hip joints in which the thigh turns.

⁴⁷ It is significant that thighs are mentioned rather than “knees,” which, as a major leg joint, would seem the more obvious point of separation, as with the ἰσχία mentioned above. See also the distinction Herodotus makes with the stories about Miltiades’ wound, below (57–58). Additionally, the manner of Cleomenes’ death may allude to the ritual sacrificing of animals and the offering of

Griffiths, arguing that the story about Cleomenes' death was almost certainly completely fabricated, suggests that Herodotus probably relied on "a grossly prejudicial tradition" about Cleomenes and that the story of the king's death was the culmination of "all-purpose anti-tyrant folklore."⁴⁸ Scott disagrees with Griffiths on the matter and manner of Cleomenes' death but does not comment on the physical specifics, which are unusual even for male suicide.⁴⁹ This suggests that the explanations Herodotus chooses to give for Cleomenes' madness help fit the disgraced king's thigh wounds into the folkloric pattern of the mutilated hero.⁵⁰ Most of the Greeks say that his death was a punishment for having persuaded the priestess at Delphi to lie about Demaratus, Cleomenes' rival and enemy (6.75.3). The Athenians say Cleomenes was beset by madness because he destroyed the *temenos* of Eleusis, whereas the Argives say it was divine vengeance for killing refugees in their temple of Argos and burning down the holy grove in that sacred precinct (6.75.3). All three reasons connect Cleomenes' madness with religious transgressions—against the Pythia, against the deities of Eleusis (Demeter and Persephone), or against the hero Argos.⁵¹ The latter two explanations connect his madness and subsequent self-mutilation specifically with the violation of sanctuaries: Cleomenes, like Cambyses, violates human and divine law.⁵² Moreover, although burning land was a common practice in warfare (and Cleomenes was not even formally waging a war), these particular explanations connect him with the barren land associated with the wounded (lamed) king of folklore.

We hear little of the Spartans again in the narrative until they refuse to send help to the Athenians at Marathon. Although their refusal was due to a legitimate religious festival (the Carneia), the Spartans come across in the

thigh bones and fat from the thighs. Wounding the *γαστήρ* ("stomach") also connects Cleomenes with Cambyses: see above, 53, n. 32.

⁴⁸ Griffiths 1988: 57 (and 54–70 in general).

⁴⁹ See Scott 2005: 292. Given that men tended to commit suicide by hurling themselves into volcanoes or down mountains (as Empedocles and Pherecydes were said to have done, respectively), Cleomenes' gruesome and fatal self-mutilation is unprecedented.

⁵⁰ Griffiths (1988) suggests many possible influences on the manner of Cleomenes' death, but does not mention any connection with the thigh wound tradition. He considers the king's supposed suicide an "illustrative death" because Cleomenes committed the insane acts of cutting down sacred groves and flaying a holy corpse (61, 67), so "popular tradition provides him with a homologous end" (61). He also cites the parallel of Hegesistratos (Hdt. 9.37). But Griffiths, who says that Cleomenes hacks himself to pieces "from the feet up" (61), reads the Greek too loosely: the text specifically states that Cleomenes starts from his calves.

⁵¹ Forsdyke 2002: 346: "Herodotus is concerned with the relationship of Cleomenes' acts of sacrilege against the Argives to his gruesome death It is apparent that Herodotus and his sources have remembered and shaped the Cleomenes material for its moral implications."

⁵² Stadter 2006: 245. Mikalson (2002: 193), too, cites Cambyses and Cleomenes as "notoriously impious" and so due for divine punishment. The Spartans, pragmatic as usual, attributed Cleomenes' insanity to excessive drinking (6.84.1); cf. above, 55, n. 43 and n. 44. Herodotus' own opinion is that what happened to Cleomenes was punishment for what he did to Demaratus (6.84.3).

narrative as ineffectual by their non-presence at this crucial battle. But whereas the Spartans appear to be at a low point, Marathon marked the rise of the Athenian general Miltiades, who receives the last of the three thigh wounds in Book 6.⁵³ After the battle of Marathon, Miltiades’ reputation was so great that the Athenians supplied him with money and ships without even asking what he wanted them for. He wanted to attack Paros, but for unspecified personal reasons (much as Histiaeus wanted to attack Miletus at the beginning of Book 6). During his invasion Miltiades trespasses into the sanctuary of Demeter on Paros (Herodotus does not explain why) and has to jump the fence to do so because he cannot open the doors. Once inside the sacred precinct he is suddenly overcome with fright; when trying to jump back over the fence he falls and twists his thigh (τόν μηρὸν σπασθῆναι, 6.134.2).⁵⁴ Herodotus reports that some say Miltiades injured his knee, not his thigh (οἱ δὲ αὐτὸν τὸ γόνυ προσπταῖσαι λέγουσι, 6.134.2),⁵⁵ thus drawing a clear distinction between these two parts of the body. Although Herodotus reports both versions, he intentionally chooses the thigh wound as the main version of the injury, mentioning the thigh no less than three times in short succession (6.134.2–3).

Miltiades clearly wounded himself so badly that he had to give up the expedition. All he had succeeded in doing in Paros was to burn the crops. Although crop-burning was standard in warfare, as mentioned above, Miltiades destroyed these crops for a personal vendetta. The result is that we again find the image of barren land associated with the hero lamed by a thigh wound. Miltiades failed to annex Paros and was put on trial by the Athenians on charges of fraud (6.135–136). His thigh wound became so badly infected that he could not speak in his own defense in court (οὐκ ἀπελογέετο ἦν γὰρ ἀδύνατος ὥστε σηπομένου τοῦ μηροῦ, 6.136.2).⁵⁶ Finally, Miltiades died of gangrene, his heroic status destroyed (μετὰ ταῦτα σφακελίσαντός τε τοῦ μηροῦ καὶ σαπέντος τελευτῶ, 6.136.3).⁵⁷ At the same time, his death presented a crisis for the Athenians,

⁵³The coincidence of Miltiades’ wound with that of Cambyses has been noted but not analyzed by Immerwahr (1966: 192), who does not mention the wounds of Histiaeus and Cleomenes.

⁵⁴As Scott (2005: 437) points out, the “fence” (ἔρκος) was probably a stone wall, and it would be misleading to think of Miltiades as actually *impaling* his leg on a piece of it. Nor does Herodotus suggest impalement. See also Scott 2005: 438–439 and 441, with extended discussion about the nature of infection at 640–642. Daly (1980: 59–60) speculates that Miltiades’ wound involved a compound fracture of the thigh bone. Such an injury would be more serious than a stab wound to the thigh, because in antiquity a compound fracture would be more susceptible to fatal infections.

⁵⁵On Herodotus’ sources here, see Hornblower 2002: 379–380 and Scott 2005: 435–439.

⁵⁶On the Greek words designating different stages of sepsis (e.g., σαπῆναι, σηπηδόν), see Salazar 2000: 32–34 and Scott 2005: 439, 441, and 641–642. In a sense, Miltiades is rendered impotent in court.

⁵⁷Scott (2005: 443–444) notes that the terminology is that of a layman, not a doctor, but that the terms clearly reflect a tradition that Miltiades’ condition grew even worse after his trial, and that he must have died within five weeks of the original injury.

who had now lost their most prominent military leader—just when the Persians were preparing to attack Greece again.⁵⁸

This emphasis on the loss of effective leaders is unusually important for Book 6, which may help explain the cluster of three thigh wounds in this section. In Book 6, the three main groups of Greek peoples in the narrative—the Ionians, the Spartans, and the Athenians—lose their leaders at a crucial point in Greek history: the Persian invasion of the Greek mainland. The deaths of Aristagoras and Histiaeus (494 B.C.E.) signal the failure of the Ionian revolt. The death of Cleomenes, coming in ca 490 B.C.E., coincided with the first Persian invasion.⁵⁹ The death of Miltiades (489 B.C.E.) left Athens without a prominent general until the rise of Themistocles in the early 480s. Although Miltiades was crucial in the unexpected Athenian victory at Marathon, his death at the end of Book 6, followed immediately by the account of Darius' anger and intended vengeance at the beginning of Book 7, emphasizes the cumulatively fragmented nature of Greek leadership at this stage in the Persian wars, adding a high degree of literary suspense even for an audience that knew the final outcome.

Similarly, the manipulation of a foreboding motif is consistent with Herodotean narrative strategy, which often plays up patterns connected to arrogant and deluded behavior. Failure to understand and observe the *nomoi* of cultures foreign to one's own routinely signals trouble for a number of prominent characters, including Cambyses and Xerxes. Crossing significant natural boundaries, especially bodies of water, signals the imminent downfall of characters who do so, including Croesus (the Halys river), Darius (the Araxes river), and Xerxes (the Hellespont). More specifically relevant to the motivic pattern of thigh wounds is Lateiner's study of laughter as a bad sign in Herodotus. He calls it an "authorial intimation of disaster in store for the laughers," a conscious patterning that "provides a structuring device, which suggests some inadequacy of character and thus helps to justify for the reader" the character's approaching destruction.⁶⁰ Notably, these patterns are all actions on the part of the transgressors, and form part of the transgressive acts themselves. Thigh wounds, to the contrary, are inflicted upon characters who have already transgressed. Yet, if Herodotus expected his audience to pick up on boundary crossings and laughter, we can reasonably argue that he counted on his audience to notice the increasing significance of thigh wounds during the narrative as well.

In short, given the rarity of detailed wounds in Herodotus, it is unlikely that the historian assigned them randomly or with a careless eye toward his

⁵⁸Miltiades was survived by his son Cimon, who went on to become a prominent Athenian leader in his own right. In this case, the historical record trumps the literary motif of the "mutilated hero" leaving no offspring.

⁵⁹Not until Thermopylae, ten years later, do we hear about Cleomenes' successor, his half-brother Leonidas.

⁶⁰Lateiner 1977: 174. Examples of doomed laughers include Cyrus (1.90.3), Leotychidas (6.67.2), Cambyses (e.g., 3.29.1, 3.35.3, 3.37.2), and Xerxes (e.g., 7.103.1, 7.105).

sources. Rather, the evidence indicates that Herodotus intentionally emphasized thigh wounds even when other versions of these men's injuries were available. Herodotus, who was so clearly familiar with Homeric epic and various forms of folkloric narrative,⁶¹ knew what he was doing in assigning thigh wounds to certain characters who may not, as a matter of historical fact, have incurred them (e.g., Histiaeus, Cleomenes), or in playing up the significance of thigh wounds to characters who almost certainly did receive them (e.g., Cambyzes, Miltiades). We can conclude that the thigh wounds of Cambyzes, Histiaeus, Cleomenes, and Miltiades—specifically, mutilations rather than injuries received in battle—and Herodotus' treatment of them within his narrative context largely conform to the folkloric motif of the "mutilated hero." Thigh wounds mark the moments when these characters, who initially have high status, suffer reversals of fortune, falling from their former greatness because of the pursuit of their own self-interest. These men not only lose their community standing and die shortly thereafter, but also leave their people in chaotic situations. Herodotus most likely chose to specify these particular wounds because, even for historical rather than mythological characters, such wounds fit to a large degree with his audience's expectations of storytelling. The occurrence of thigh wounds in Herodotus' narrative, far from being coincidental, connects these specific characters with a number of the author's major themes, including cultural, religious, and moral transgression.

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⁶¹This was demonstrated, for example, by Aly (1921). Also, the use of quasi-religious mythic propaganda is generally well documented for the period Herodotus was narrating; cf. the Alcmeonid curse.

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PROVERBS IN HERODOTUS' DIALOGUE BETWEEN SOLON AND CROESUS (1.30-33):
METHODOLOGY AND 'MAKING SENSE' IN THE STUDY OF GREEK RELIGION

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PROVERBS IN HERODOTUS' DIALOGUE BETWEEN SOLON AND CROESUS (1.30-33): METHODOLOGY AND 'MAKING SENSE' IN THE STUDY OF GREEK RELIGION*

B. ANTHONY ELLIS

Introduction: Herodotus and the Gnōmē

DEVX prouerbes contraires sont,
Et tous les deux bien grand cours ont.
L'un dit, LA MORT N'A POINT DE TORT;
L'autre, TOVSIOVRS A TORT LA MORT.
Ces deux d'une grande discorde
Peuvent bien venir en concorde.
Proueu que nous ayons esgard
Que les deux ont diuers regard:
L'un, à ce qu'elle de soy dit:
L'autre, à ce qu'on luy contredit.

Henri Estienne¹

Herodotus' readers have long been drawn to his *gnōmai*. Early Protestant scholars placed the *Histories*' pithy and attractive *gnōmai* (or *sententiae*) at the centre of their analyses of its theological content, and marvelled at Herodotus' ability to select or turn a phrase that eloquently voices an important idea.² Yet when Henri Estienne, for instance, praised Herodotus' *gnōmai*, he used the term in a way that only partially resembled the ancient historian's practice, since Herodotus generally uses *gnōmē* to mean an 'opinion' and never

* All references in the form '1.32' or '1.32.5' are to Herodotus' *Histories* unless otherwise stated.

My thanks to students in my Herodotus lectures in spring 2013 for thought-provoking discussion of these and other Herodotean scenes, and to Michael Lurie, Tom Mackenzie, Michael Crawford, Robert Parker, and Elizabeth Birch for discussing several drafts of this paper and pointing out much that required rethinking (though I have not succeeded in addressing all points). I am also grateful to Ed Sanders for stimulating correspondence on aspects of divine *phthonos* and for sharing unpublished material.

¹ H. Estienne *Les premisses, ou Le I liure des prouerbes epigramatizez* (n.p. 1593) 207; on Estienne's use of proverbs and tendency to seek coherence see B. Boudou, 'Proverbes et formules gnomiques chez Henri Estienne: de l'histoire à la poésie', *Seizième Siècle* 1 (2005): 161-74.

² See, further, section IV below and B. A. Ellis, 'Herodotus and God in the Protestant Reformation', in *God in history: reading and rewriting Herodotean theology from Plutarch to the Renaissance*, *Histos* Supplement 4, ed. B. A. Ellis (Newcastle, 2015) 171-244.

to mean ‘proverb’ in the sense of a well-known phrase with a fixed and attractive form.³ In one way, however, Estienne’s usage overlaps with that of Herodotus: both assume that a *gnōmē* reflects the speaker’s consciously held opinion.

Roughly four centuries later, in an influential chapter on Herodotus’ vision of historical causation, John Gould again put *gnōmai* at the centre of the debate on Herodotus’ religious beliefs, and he too used the word in a way that the ancient historian might not have recognized, now linked to a new interpretative approach. Gould argued that Herodotus and his audience were accustomed to dealing in ‘gnomic generalizations’ and that Herodotus’ *gnōmai* ought not to be confused with a ‘theory of history’. Ancient users of *gnōmai*, Gould suggested, like users of proverbs today, were not as concerned with consistency as one might expect, and were content directly to juxtapose logically incompatible *gnōmai*.⁴ Gould offered a brief but influential analysis of Solon’s dialogue with Croesus, concurring with the conclusions of Mabel Lang’s study of Herodotean proverbs: several ideas often considered central to Herodotus’ world-view were in fact ‘proverbs’ or ‘maxims’ with ‘no merit for Herodotus as an expression of historical causation’.⁵

Gould’s discussion of the nature of the *gnōmē* is worth citing at length since it moves in a direction that subsequent scholars have further explored, and succinctly voices several ideas that remain influential today:⁶

Herodotus’ audience would have recognized his generalizations as *gnomai*: the Greek word *gnome* is not quite what we call a proverb (since it can be the creation of an individual on the spur of the moment), but like a proverb it will have the form of a generalization, a summing-up of human experience (‘divinity is envious’); it will be offered as a truth to be acknowledged by its hearers [...] What a proverb does not do, nor will it be supposed by its hearers to do, is require all subsequent experience to bear it out; it does not claim to put forward the sort of general truth that offers what one writer has called ‘a sort of inferential licence’, a hypothesis that is to be verified or falsified by the occurrence or non-occurrence of its predicted consequences; it is not an assertion that any counter-example will render void. [...] if I say, ‘he who hesitates is lost’, I am not asking to be rebutted by being faced with examples where quick decisions have led to disastrous results. Faced with these, I say, rather, ‘Look before you leap’, or ‘More haste less speed’. ‘Look after the pennies; the pounds will look after themselves’ is not a ‘theory’ of economic behaviour like Keynesian or monetarist theory; it exists happily side by side with ‘Penny wise, pound foolish’,

³ J. E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Hildesheim 1977), s.v. γνώμη lists (*inter alia*) the following senses: 1. ‘mind’, 2. ‘opinion, belief’, 3. ‘an expressed opinion, judgement’, 3c. ‘approaching the sense *intention, plan*’, 3d. ‘dictum’, ‘judicial sentence’, ‘oracular response’. Uses of γνώμη which Powell classes as *dicta* are generally too long and specific to bear any resemblance to proverbs (e.g. Artabanus’ γνώμην γενναιοτάτην (8.26): Παπαί, Μαρδόνιε, κοίους ἐπ’ ἄνδρας ἤγαγες μαχησομένους ἡμέας, οἳ οὐ περὶ χρημάτων τὸν ἀγῶνα ποιεῖνται ἀλλὰ περὶ ἀρετῆς). Thucydides uses γνώμη in much the same way, e.g. 1.45.1 (referring to the extended rationalization at 1.44.2-3), 53.2, 54.2.

⁴ J. Gould, *Herodotus* (Bristol 1989) 81-82.

⁵ M. Lang, *Herodotean narrative and discourse* (London 1984) 62 – cited by Gould, *Herodotus* (n.4, above) 79-80 – discussing Solon’s mention of divine *phthonos*.

⁶ Gould, *Herodotus* (n.4, above) 81-82 (my italics), cited by H. S. Versnel, *Coping with the Gods* (Leiden 2011) 220-21; T. Harrison, *Divinity and History* (Oxford 2000) 79-80; H. Bowden, ‘Xenophon and the scientific study of religion’, in *Xenophon and his World*, ed. C. Tuplin (Stuttgart 2004) 242; L. I. Hau, ‘The Changeability of fortune in Greek historiography’ (PhD, London) 29.

... just as ‘Too many cooks spoil the broth’ does not exclude ‘Many hands make light work’ [...] they are generalizations, but at the same time they appeal to accepted truth, to shared experiences and to the comfort of familiarity [...]

Before turning to our analysis of Herodotus, it is worth making a few points about Gould’s characterization of proverbial or gnomic habits of thought.⁷ Gould draws on a phase of proverb research which tended to view the existence of contradictory proverbs within the repertoire of a particular group or individual as problematic.⁸ In fact, the existence of two proverbs that seem (in isolation) to push in opposite directions may tell us very little; it is the use that is made of the proverbs in question that matters.⁹ In the case of ‘too many cooks spoil the broth’ and ‘many hands make light work’ it is not necessarily the case that proverb-users typically understand these to mean *different* and *incompatible* things and consider both to be valid when applied to the same situation at the same moment. Each proverb can describe a true situation, since one can sensibly believe that sometimes it is good to have many people in the kitchen (the ‘many hands’ version) and that at other times it is bad (the ‘too many cooks’ version). The question is: which is applicable to the situation at hand? Sometimes, then, two contradictory proverbs can support opposing positions in a debate (though all parties can acknowledge that each proverb would be valid in the appropriate situation). Alternatively, many proverb users intuitively give different meanings to two proverbs that seem, at first sight, contradictory – in this case they might observe that ‘hands’ and ‘cooks’ are not identical. If the broth has been salted three times, a morass of would-be ‘cooks’ may quite reasonably be ordered out of the kitchen, whereas the ‘hands’ obediently chopping the vegetables can stay. The store of gnomic wisdom can thereby be reinterpreted to provide a coherent guide to life. The existence of two superficially contradictory proverbs within a single language or culture, therefore, is less interesting than how a speaker uses these proverbs – a point nicely illustrated in the epigram composed by Henri Estienne, cited at the start of this section.

Crucially, the English proverb pairs around which Gould structures his analysis are not similar to the Greek *gnōmai* under discussion (those in Solon’s speech at 1.32). In normal usage proverb pairs understood by all parties to be contradictory serve to bolster *opposing* opinions and, as such, sound strange in juxtaposition. To say ‘he’s penny wise but pound foolish – but if he looks after the pennies the pounds will look after themselves’ would puzzle even the most seasoned user of English proverbs (the same can be said of other comparisons that have been offered, discussed below). As we shall see, such contrasting proverb pairs are not an appropriate comparison for Solon’s statement that ‘god is *phthoneros*

⁷ S. O. Shapiro, ‘Proverbial wisdom in Herodotus’, *TAPhA* 130 (2000) 89-118 (91-95) has critiqued Gould’s treatment of ‘contradictory’ proverbs. Definitions of the proverb today tend to focus on oral effects, binary structure, and brevity. None, to my knowledge, sees inconsistency or contradictability as an inherent part of the proverb. See, e.g., J. Russo, ‘The Poetics of the ancient Greek proverb’, *Journal of Folklore Research* 20 (1983): 121-30 (121-22, esp. n.1) and Shapiro ‘Proverbial wisdom’ 93 n.19 (for further bibliography). For ancient conceptions of the *paromion* (where inconsistency is again not a criteria) see Lang, *Herodotean narrative* (n.5, above) 60; cf. Polyb. 39.8.1-2 (cited below).

⁸ K. Yankah, ‘Do proverbs contradict?’, *Folklore Forum* 17 (1984): 2-19 (2-6) traces (with bibliography) developments in how scholars have understood contradictory proverb pairs.

⁹ This point has become a standard feature of proverb research in the last three decades, including research on ancient proverbs; cf. A. Lardinois, ‘Modern paroemiology and the use of *gnomai* in Homer’s *Iliad*’, *CPh* 92 (1997) 213-34 (13-14 & n.3) and nn.7-8 (above).

and *tarakhōdēs*’ and ‘man is *sumphorē*’, spoken one after another by the same person in the course of a single argument.

We might also wish to reconsider the claim that proverb users are typically content to contradict a given proverb by subsequently voicing another proverb which (in their opinion) urges the opposite idea. Humanist scholars are a case in point: Erasmus considered the first proverb in his *Adagia* – τὰ τῶν φύλων κοινά – to signify that ‘the sum of all created things is in God and God is all things, the universe is in fact all one’. ‘An ocean of philosophy, or rather of theology’, he writes, ‘is opened up to us by this tiny proverb.’¹⁰ It is hard to believe that Erasmus, because he expresses these ideas in proverbial form, would have also endorsed another proverb which he understood as directly contradictory. The same might be said of Plato’s handling of another variant of the same proverb (τὸ πᾶλαι λεγόμενον) in his *Laws* (739b-c). This point can be generalized: examples of illogical proverb usage in the twenty-first century (such as that discussed on p.99-100, below) are no support for the idea that proverbial or gnomic statements are made without regard for coherence by *all* cultures which habitually employ proverbs. Many individuals and societies employ patterns of speech which share the features of the ‘proverb’ as it is defined today (e.g. brevity, rhyme, balance), but no evidence has been advanced to suggest that there exists a universal ‘proverb culture’ with intellectual rules that hold good across different cultures and ages.

Gould’s challenge to the traditional scholarly practice of ‘reconstructing’ perfectly coherent theories about the gods and historical causation and attributing these to Herodotus – on which see sections IV and V, below – has been influential, as has his suggestion that the nature of ‘proverbs’ or *gnōmai* might provide the key to understanding the inconsistencies he sees. Most recently Henk Versnel, developing a long interest in contradictions in ancient religious thought,¹¹ has offered a detailed analysis of proverbial thought in Herodotus’ Croesus *logos* focusing, like Gould, on allegedly contradictory proverbs within the dialogue of Solon and Croesus.¹² Versnel uses the Herodotean evidence to support wider conclusions about the nature of *gnomologisches Wissen* (‘gnomological knowledge’) in the archaic Greek world. *Gnomologisches Wissen*, Versnel argues, is fundamentally alien to modern secular thought in that it does not obey the law of non-contradiction but rather functions in a ‘paratactic’ manner, so that contradictory statements and proverbs can comfortably co-exist.¹³

These challenges to the paradigm of absolute consistency that has long reigned in literary studies of Greek theology are a welcome development. In what follows, however, I shall argue that some of the stronger claims about the nature and extent of Herodotus’ theological incoherence rely on a problematic interpretative methodology, repeatedly

¹⁰ *Vides quantum philosophiae vel theologiae magis oceanum nobis paroemia tantilla aperuit*. Trans. cited from W. Barker, *The Adages of Erasmus* (Toronto 2001) xxx. See Erasmus’ discussion of proverb 1 *ad loc.* in Erasmus, *Opera omnia* [...] (1993) 84-6, 60-62 (*prolegommina*).

¹¹ See H. S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman religion I: Ter Unus: Isis, Dionysos, Hermes, three studies in henotheism* (Leiden 1990).

¹² An episode not discussed in Shapiro’s excellent study of Herodotean proverbs (n.7), but *cf.* Shapiro, ‘Herodotus and Solon’, *ClAnt* 15 (1997) 348-64.

¹³ Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) esp. 7-8, 198-201. Versnel’s views vary to some degree over the course of this thought-provoking work – written, as he notes, in various different places over 15 years. In discussing his arguments I address those that particularly underlie his analysis of Herodotus in chapter two and appendix 3 (noting divergent views when I can). The views criticized, then, are views which appear at the relevant points in this work and which (given the influence of this seminal study) it seems important to challenge.

employed in recent analyses of the dialogue of Solon and Croesus. This methodology arises out of a justified concern – characteristic of anthropological scholarship – not to *impose* ‘coherence’ on a foreign belief-system, but the principle has, on occasion, been taken too far. On the grounds that ancient Greek gnomic and religious thought is inconsistent Gould, Versnel, and others have argued that scholars should resist the temptation to ‘make sense’ of Herodotus’ text,¹⁴ and consequently they interpret individual words and phrases (classed as *gnōmai*) as isolated units. (This practice, as we shall see, has also been adopted by others who also argue that Herodotus’ text is incoherent, but explain this as a Herodotean literary tactic rather than a feature of archaic thought.¹⁵) This has two problems. First, the reasoning is circular since the theory (that ancient gnomic/religious thought is inconsistent) and the interpretative method (ignoring the context when deciding on the ‘meaning’ of a specific *gnōmē*) are co-dependent: the theory justifies the method, and the method automatically confirms the theory. Second, the process of decontextualized interpretation, as sometimes practised on Herodotus’ text, is problematic from a philosophical and linguistic perspective.

This article will focus on the theological and philosophical ideas commonly identified as ‘proverbs’ or *gnōmai* within the dialogue of Solon and Croesus (1.30-33), with occasional reference to the rest of the Croesus *logos* (1.6-91) and the thematically related discussion between Croesus and Cyrus on the ‘circle of human affairs’ (1.207). These two dialogues and the wider story of the rise and fall of Croesus and the Mermnad dynasty contain a host of concepts whose complications and ambiguities have been largely neglected in recent discussions which seek to assert the incoherence or gnomic status of Herodotus’ thought or Greek religion more generally. I shall argue that, if the ideas of Solon’s speech like ‘the divine is grudging and meddlesome’ or ‘man is entirely chance’ are *gnōmai*, they are so in the Herodotean sense of the word: considered judgements intended to be taken seriously and to be placed in a coherent relationship to other ideas uttered by the same speaker within the same speech. They are, indeed, some of the most important and consistently foregrounded themes in the *Histories*. Although clothed in epigrammatic form, they are perfectly amenable to a coherent interpretation if we are – as we must be – prepared to see it.

1. *The Rise and Fall of Croesus and his Dialogue with Solon: Recent Analyses*

ἀλλὰ μοι δοκεῖ κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν παροιμίαν εὐτυχῆσαι μὲν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα δυνατόν, διευτυχῆσαι γε μὴν ἀδύνατον. Polybius (23.12.4)

But it seems to me, as the common proverb goes, that a man can have some good fortune, but cannot always be fortunate.

The dialogue of Solon and Croesus (1.30-3) is too well known, complex, and debated to admit of a brief summary. Because of the prominence of Solon’s speech in the general structure of the *Histories* and the Croesus *logos*, the attention drawn to it by Croesus’ pyre-top lamentations (1.86), and its close resemblance to later speeches before the misfortunes

¹⁴ On ‘making sense’ see Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 194-5, esp. n.105, and J. Gould, ‘On Making sense of religion’, in *Greek religion and society*, ed. P. E. Easterling & J. V. Muir (Cambridge 1985) 1-33.

¹⁵ Most notably C. B. R. Pelling, ‘Educating Croesus’, *CLAnt* 25 (2006) 141-177 whose assessment of Herodotus as an intentionally evasive and self-contradicting author is developed elsewhere, e.g. E. Baragwanath, *Motivation and narrative in Herodotus* (Oxford 2008).

of the Samian and Persian empires (3.40, 7.10ε, 7.46, *cf.* 1.5.4, 207.2), Solon's words have long been considered the key to understanding Croesus' dramatic reversal of fortune. The dialogue, which closely echoes the themes of Achilles' speech to Priam in *Iliad* Book 24 (as I argue elsewhere), was itself reworked several times in the ancient world – by Lucian and Plutarch, among others – and has been at the centre of debates on Herodotus' religious and historical beliefs since the early modern period.¹⁶ In 1971 Charles Fornara found Herodotus' own 'philosophy of history' in Solon's speech, at the centre of which is 'the instability of human fortune'.¹⁷ But since Gould's influential study, the speech and surrounding narrative have become the paradigmatic example of Herodotus' theological incoherence. On Solon's speech, Gould writes (in opposition to Fornara):¹⁸

Closer inspection suggests that we are not quite dealing with the sort of unified and structured set of ideas that we are entitled to call a theory, but rather with a set of metaphors of very different implications. A 'cycle' (*kyklos*) of human experience suggests regularity and recurrence as well as inevitability [*i.e.* 1.207.2]; the 'envy' (*phthonos*) of divinity seems to imply a pattern of supernatural intervention in a human life which is itself recognizably 'human' in its motivation and hence once more in principle predictable [*i.e.* 1.32.1]. But 'disruptiveness' (*to tarakhōdes*) and the recurring idea of 'chance' seemingly stress the randomness and unpredictability of divine intervention [*i.e.* 1.32.1], while the impossibility of a man's possessing all goods seems to point to something different again, something more like a natural limitation [*i.e.* 1.32.8].

In his rich study of the Croesus *logos*, Pelling also suggests that the 'several different theses jostling in Solon's words' make uncomfortable bed-fellows. Pelling identifies three theses (slightly different from Gould's): first, that 'life is mutable and anyone's fortunes may change' (*i.e.* 'man is entirely *sumphorē*', 1.32.4); second that 'God is envious of those who come closest to divine prosperity, and turbulent in destroying them' (*i.e.* 'the divine is *phthoneron* and *tarakhōdes*', 1.32.1); third that 'the most prosperous act or think in particular ways, and those ways contribute to their destruction', though this last remains in the subtext of Solon's speech, in Pelling's view. Rather than being made explicit, this theme

¹⁶ See Plut. *Solon* 27, Lucian *Charon* 10-13, *cf.* Diodorus Siculus 9.26-7, and further references in F. H. Weissbach, 'Kroisos', in *RE Supplementband* 5 (1931) 463, 471-72. Although humanists were fond of citing Solon's *sententiae*, to my knowledge the first devoted study of the dialogue as a whole is Christian Garve's 'Die Unterredung des Solons mit dem Krösus' in his *Versuche über verschiedene Gegenstände aus der Moral, der Litteratur, und dem gesellschaftlichen Leben* (Breslau 1796), vol. II, 2-73. In the nineteenth century the speeches of the 'warners' (especially Solon) were extensively discussed in debates over the meaning of divine *phthonos* and divine *nemesis* (below n.29). Important studies since the nineteenth century include: O. Regenbogen, 'Die Geschichte von Solon und Krösus', *Die humanistische Gymnasium* 41 (1930) 1-20; F. Hellmann, *Herodots Kroisos-Logos*, Neue Phil. Untt. 9 (Berlin 1934); T. Krischer, 'Solon und Kroisos', *WS* 77 (1964) 174-7; M. Lloyd, 'Cleobis and Biton (Hdt. 1.31)', *Hermes* 115 (1987) 22-8; C. C. Chiasson, 'The Herodotean Solon', *GRBS* 27 (1986) 249-62; Shapiro 'Herodotus and Solon' (n.12, above); Harrison, *Divinity* (n.6, above) 31-63.

¹⁷ C. W. Fornara, *Herodotus – an interpretative essay* (Oxford 1971) 18-19, 64-65, 77-79.

¹⁸ Gould, *Herodotus* (n.4, above) 79 (references in square brackets are mine).

is suggested by the surrounding narrative: Croesus' 'unjust deeds' mentioned earlier (1.26) and the narrator's references to *nemesis* ('righteous indignation', 1.34).¹⁹ Pelling sums up:²⁰

The first is the most general thesis, one that applies to all humanity; all are equally subject to such mutability. It has particular reference to the wealthiest and most powerful only in the sense that they start at the top of Fortune's Wheel and can only swing downwards; their shifts may therefore be the most marked. The second and third differ from the first in focusing on the rich and powerful; it is not now simply a question of Fortune's universal Wheel, it is rather that these people will be *more* subject to fortune-changes than the mass of humanity.

In Pelling's view the narrator's comment that 'a great *nemesis* from god took Croesus' (1.34) represents a 'new thesis':²¹

[This] goes some way beyond anything directly suggested by Solon's words: this is not simply the second, 'divine envy' thesis, for such envy would most naturally be evoked not by Croesus' *perception* of his own felicity, but by the *fact* of a felicity so great that it threatened the boundaries of the divine. Now for the first time we find a suggestion that the rich and prosperous may be seduced by their felicity into thinking (though not here, we should note, in acting) in ways which bring on their own destruction.

The audience, Pelling suggests, would not necessarily perceive these three strands of thought as wholly distinct but would 'be aware of a blur of different suggestions that partly, but only partly, overlap'. Pelling's view – *contra* Gould and (later) Versnel – is that Herodotus intentionally has his characters and the narrator utter incoherent statements in order to stress the opacity of historical causation and to illustrate the impossibility of honest and direct speech in the court of an oriental monarch.

Recently Versnel has argued that Solon's talk of divine *phthonos* is incompatible with his talk of *sumphorē* ('two crystal clear, distinct options to explain (mis)fortune') since the mechanisms they imply are quite discrete:²²

Solon mentions two different conceptions: divine envy threatening only the excessively prosperous, side by side with the vicissitude of luck (*sumphorē*), which should concern every human being since it works in both directions: from good to bad and in reverse, and also includes various mixtures. Either of the two – divine envy and chance – often occurs as a general principle in its own right in Herodotus.

¹⁹ The *adikia* are, Pelling notes, not mentioned in the dialogue itself, but in the earlier description of Croesus' campaigns at 1.5.3, 6.4, 92.1.

²⁰ Pelling, 'Educating Croesus' (n.15, above) 147–49. For criticism of Pelling's 'third strand' see Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 532–36; both scholars assume that divine *phthonos* cannot respond to the thoughts of powerful rulers (further below).

²¹ Pelling, 'Educating Croesus' (n.15, above) 150 (his italics).

²² Versnel *Coping* (n.6, above) 183, cf. 181–88, 534.

So this passage confronts us with two – not necessarily mutually exclusive, yet clearly distinct – explanations of sudden changes in human life.

Summarizing the different causational patterns in the story of Croesus as a whole, Versnel writes:²³

Despite all ingenious, elegant and seductive attempts at overall interpretations it still is asking too much to glue together divine envy, arbitrary chance, mechanical rules of alternation, the law that the excessively fortunate will end badly, the will of the gods, predestined fate, retribution for the offence of an ancestor and personal error into one satisfactory coherent composition.

The conclusion of these three diverse and influential studies, then, is that the Croesus *logos* as a whole and the dialogue of Solon and Croesus in particular present us with a host of distinct ideas that have limited internal coherence and offer incompatible or alternative views of the role of the gods, chance, and fate in human life and history. While Pelling suggests character-based explanations for the most striking dissonance – Solon talks, for example, of *phthonos* and not *nemesis*²⁴ – Gould and Versnel view this and other inconsistencies as the unintentional product of ancient Greek patterns of religious and proverbial thought.

There are, I argue, two methodological problems underlying these claims. First, the common-sense view of meaning implicit in these discussions is insufficiently nuanced for the analysis of an author's metaphysical beliefs: implicit in each discussion is the idea that by using a particular word, phrase, or proverb Herodotus automatically refers (irrespective of the context) to a fixed theological or philosophical position; second, in ascribing a specific meaning to each word/proverb, Gould, Pelling, and Versnel repeatedly narrow the semantic range of each so as to declare them 'inconsistent'. I focus, in the following section, on two of these allegedly dissonant concepts: 'divine *phthonos*' and '*nemesis* from god'.

II. The Ambiguity of Solon's Words

I begin, as do the commentators, with Solon's opening statement about the nature of divinity: τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὼν φθονερόν τε καὶ παραχῶδες (1.32.1: 'the divine is entirely grudging and troubling'). The Greek word *phthoneros* has a broad semantic range, translating concepts which English covers with, *inter alia*, the words 'envious', 'jealous', 'grudging', and 'resentful'.²⁵ In the classical period within the writings of a single author the emotion

²³ Versnel *Coping* (n.6, above) 197.

²⁴ For the view that divine *phthonos* is a tactful courtly euphemism for what is, in reality, divine *nemesis*, see: D. L. Cairns 'Hybris, dishonour, and thinking big', *JHS* 116 (1996) 1-32 (22); R. V. Munson, Review of Harrison, *Divinity and history*, *BMCRev* (22.06.2001, near n.4); C. B. R. Pelling, 'Speech and narrative in the *Histories*', in *The Cambridge companion to Herodotus*, ed. C. Dewald and J. Marincola (Cambridge 2006) 106, 109; 'Educating Croesus' (n.15, above) 150-51. G. Nagy *Pindar's Homer* (Baltimore 1990) 244, 247-48, sees Solon's speech as 'coded' *ainos* (but mentions neither *phthonos* nor *nemesis*). On this view Solon warns Croesus of 'divine envy' to avoid angering a potentially violent tyrant by telling him that he is liable to meet with god's 'righteous indignation'. For a different analysis, see below.

²⁵ For an analysis of the many different 'scripts' which *phthonos* can have, see E. Sanders, *Envy and jealousy in*

phthonos can be viewed both positively (where the *phthonos* is called for as an appropriate and censorious response to bad behaviour)²⁶ and negatively (where *phthonos* is condemned outright as an inappropriate resentment of the deserved successes of others).²⁷ In isolation from their context, the words ‘the divinity is *phthoneron*’ might present the divine in a number of different ways. A divinity’s downward-looking, protective jealousy²⁸ (*phthonos*) of its own prosperity might begrudge all success and wealth to all mortals, ensuring that no human attains any significant level of prosperity or contentment (resulting in a miserable, static, egalitarian society, of the sort that may be suggested in Artabanus’ speech to Xerxes at Abydos on divine *phthonos* and the misery of the human condition, 7.46). Alternatively, divine jealousy might manifest itself in the periodic destruction of those who come nearest to ‘divine’ levels of good fortune, who are then *replaced* as someone else rises to fill the power vacuum – in which case we have a dynamic cycle of prosperity in a hierarchical society, in which individuals or communities rise and fall (similar to that pronounced by Croesus at 1.207 and the narrator at 1.5.4). Divine jealousy (*phthonos*) might, however, manifest itself in the destruction of those who merely *aspire* to or believe themselves to have obtained exceptionally high levels of prosperity (compare Artabanus’ first warning to Xerxes which associates divine *phthonos* with humans ‘thinking big’, 7.10ε). An upward-looking divine envy (*phthonos*) might focus on those mortals who *surpass* the gods in some way, for example in bravery, by volunteering to sacrifice their lives in battle, a danger that an immortal god could never face (for this upward-looking sense of *phthonos*, compare the Greek generals’ *phthonos* at Themistocles’ achievements, 8.124.1-2). If we divorce Solon’s words from their context, it is clear that a fifth-century Greek who describes god as *phthoneros* might mean any of a number of things.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scholars had a particular fascination with divine *phthonos* and in dozens of books, articles, and *Programmschriften* they debated scores of interpretations of ‘the *phthoneros* divinity’. Theologians, *philosophes*, anthropologists, and antiquarians construed divine *phthonos* in diverse ways, from a benevolent divinity’s concern that all should receive their just deserts in life, to the resentment of a hate-filled, jealous divinity which oppressed humanity in order to retain its authority in the world hierarchy.²⁹ Herodotus’ text has been able to sustain such disagreements precisely because

classical Athens (Oxford 2014). D. Konstan, *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks* (Toronto 2006) 111-27, argues persuasively that *phthonos* can have a ‘positive’ valence, though it is worth stressing that the prototypical connotations of term are wholly negative, and *phthoneros* (as Konstan notes) is always pejorative as a character description.

²⁶ A relatively rare valence of *phthonos*, for which see, e.g., Dem. 21.196: οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδαμῶθεν σοὶ προσήκων ἔλεος οὐδὲ καθ’ ἕν, ἀλλὰ τούναντίον μῖσος καὶ φθόνος καὶ ὀργή· τούτων γὰρ ἄξια ποιεῖς. ‘You are not worthy of anyone’s pity, not for a moment, but rather of the opposite - of hatred, *phthonos*, and anger - since these are what your actions deserve’.

²⁷ This is the ‘prototypical’ association of the word; see, e.g., Dem. 20.139-40: παντάπασιν φύσεως κακίας σημεῖον ἔστιν ὁ φθόνος, καὶ οὐκ ἔχει πρόφασιν δι’ ἣν ἂν τύχοι συγγνώμης ὁ τοῦτο πεπονθώς, εἴτα καὶ οὐδ’ ἔστιν θνητὸς ὅτου πορρώτερον ἔσθ’ ἡμῶν ἢ πόλις ἢ τοῦ φθονερά δοκεῖν εἶναι, ἀπάντων ἀπέχουσα τῶν αἰσχρῶν. ‘*Phthonos* is, in every way, the sign of a bad nature, and someone who feels it can offer no excuse which will allow them to be forgiven. Furthermore, no reproach is more alien to our city than the charge of seeming *phthoneros*, since [our city] keeps aloof from all that is shameful’.

²⁸ Here I observe the traditional, if obsolete, distinction between an upward-looking ‘envy’ (felt towards people who have what I do not) and a downward-looking ‘jealousy’ (felt towards my own possessions which others may covet).

²⁹ For the former approach see, e.g., L. Valckenaer’s comment *ad* 3.40 in P. Wesseling *Herodoti Halicarnassei historiarum libri IX* (Amsterdam 1763); A. De Jongh, *De Herodoti philosophia* (Utrecht 1833) 34 & n.4; J. C.

his writing associates divine *phthonos* with a range of behaviour that falls within the Greek concept of *phthonos*, but does not fit the theological dichotomies which many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century commentators were exploring. Each side sought to cast Herodotus according to its wider ideological concerns: on the one hand a ‘primitive’ heathen whose belief in amoral deities served as a foil to the ‘moralized’ Abrahamic religions, on the other an enlightened pagan whose belief in a just and moral divinity confirmed the possibility of natural theology, or showed the vestiges of revealed Mosaic wisdom that survived in Greek culture.³⁰

It is clear, then, that the phrase ‘the divine is *phthoneron*’, by itself and divorced from its context, cannot support Versnel’s claim that Solon here refers to a ‘one-way’ movement of human fortune ‘threatening only the excessively prosperous’ which contrasts with the allegedly ‘arbitrary’, ‘two-way’ movement of fortune concerning ‘every human being’ that is implied by the Greek word *sumphorē* (on which more below).³¹ Herodotus’ own usage shows that Versnel’s very specific exegesis is overly restrictive: after the counting of the Persian army at Abydos, Artabanus links god’s *phthoneros* nature directly with the fact that *every single human* wishes repeatedly for death as a release from the misfortunes (συνφοραί) and illnesses (νοῦσοι) which make a brief human life seem long (7.46.3-4). The same can be said of Pelling’s suggestion that ‘*nemesis* from god’ differs from divine *phthonos* because god’s *phthonos* ‘would most naturally be evoked not by a *perception* of [one’s] own felicity, but by the *fact* of a felicity so great that it threatened the boundaries of the divine’; in Artabanus’ speech to Xerxes in the Persian War Council, the behaviour associated with god’s *phthonos* includes ‘thinking big’ (φρονέειν μέγα, 7.10ε), suggesting that divine *phthonos*, like divine *nemesis* at 1.34, can respond to a person’s mental state (precisely that shown by Croesus’ persistence in his belief that he is the ‘most happy’ of men).

Gould, likewise, tends towards over-specificity in claiming that divine *phthonos* is ‘in principle predictable’ and thus dissonant with ‘the recurring idea of “chance” [which] seemingly stress[es] the randomness and unpredictability of divine intervention’. While a statement about someone’s character implies knowledge, an expectation of continuity, and thus a degree of ‘predictability’, to call a person (or a god) *phthoneros* does not allow the total predictive power over the precise nature and timing of their actions that would exclude all ‘chance’ or τύχη (except on a very particular interpretation of these latter terms). To take a parallel, I might know that Bob is irascible but I cannot know exactly what will provoke an outburst on any given day; I may know that lightning strikes tall, metal objects, but this does not give me any certain knowledge about whether, when, or with what effect

F. Baehr, *Herodoti Musae*, 4 vols (Leipzig 1830-35) IV 410-12 and ad 3.108; H. Meuss *Der sogenannte Neid der Götter bei Herodot* (Programm, Leignitz 1888) 19; for the latter, e.g., F. Geinoz, ‘Défense d’Hérodote contre les accusations de Plutarque’, *MémAcInscr* 19 (1753) 115-145; F. C. Dahlmann, *Herodot. Aus seinem Buch, sein Leben* (Altona 1823) 176-78; J. Müller, *Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde* (Breslau 1844) 325; H. Stein, *Herodotos*, 5 vols (Berlin 1883-94, 2nd edn) ad 7.10.ε & 7.46.

³⁰ I discuss the interpretation of divine *phthonos* between the Renaissance and the present in B. A. Ellis, ‘Between divine justice and divine jealousy: the interpretation of the classical Greek notion of φθόνος θεῶν between Renaissance humanism and Altertumswissenschaft’ (forthcoming) in *Erudition and the Republic of Letters* 1 (2016).

³¹ Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 183.

lightening will strike the Eiffel Tower this winter. Patterns, knowledge, and unpredictability often go hand in hand.

The analyses of *nemesis* cited in the previous section show a similar tendency to assign a highly specific meaning to a complex and polysemic word in spite of dissonance with the surrounding passages, a highly unusual methodological approach. *Nemesis* occurs only once in Herodotus' writing (1.34) so to avoid begging the question we must look outside the *Histories* to discover what Herodotus might have intended by it. In Homer *nemesis* seems to be an emotional term used of humans (and occasionally gods) corresponding closely to English 'indignation', expressing outrage at behaviour which a bystander would view as unacceptable.³² In Hesiod's *Theogony*, however, the personification of Nemesis keeps more frightening company. The daughter of 'destructive Night', Nemesis is a 'pain for mortals' (πήμα θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσι), sibling to Age, Strife, and Deception, as well as Friendship (*Th.* 223-5).

In Pindar's epinician poetry at the turn of the fifth century *hyperdikos nemesis* is credited with the dispensation of the inevitable sufferings that distinguish humans from the semi-divine Hyperboreans, namely old age, toil, and illness (*Pi. P.* 10.20-2). That humanity is subject to *nemesis* thus seems closely connected with Pindar's concern that his fortunate patron should not meet with 'grudging reversals from the gods', expressed later in the same poem (φθονεραῖς ἐκ θεῶν μετατροπῆαις 42-4, *cf. O.* 8.86-7). The idea of *nemesis* as bringer of the misfortune inevitably associated with the mortal condition (rather than as punisher of crime, injustice, or arrogance) may also be present in Hesiod's description of Nemesis in the *Theogony* as simply 'a pain for mortal men' (contrasting with the positive presentation at *Op.* 195-201).³³

Given the paucity of attestations between early epic and fifth-century lyric there can be little certainty about the development of the term *nemesis*,³⁴ but it seems likely that the emotional term *nemesis*, in the course of its abstraction to a divine or cosmic force, became associated with the limits of human fortune generally, and in doing so lost its early association with socially transgressive or unjust behaviour.³⁵ What may have begun as a

³² See D. L. Cairns, 'Ethics, ethology, terminology: Iliadic anger and the cross-cultural study of emotions', in *Ancient Anger*, ed. S. Braund and G. W. Most (Cambridge 2003) 33-37.

³³ Hesiodic personifications of emotions may be given extremely different senses across the two works (*cf. Zēlos* in *Op.* 196-201 and *Th.* 384-88) but it seems likely that the departure of Nemesis in the *Works and Days* it is the departure of the human capacity for (societally constructive) 'indignation' (*nemesis*) and 'shame' (*aidōs*), while in the *Theogony* it is presumably the cosmic force of Nemesis that is a 'pain for mortals'.

³⁴ On the cult at Rhamnous see E. Stafford, *Worshipping virtues: personification and the divine in ancient Greece* (London 2000) 76-104; *cf. R. Parker, Athenian religion: a history* (Oxford 1996) 227-37. For a diachronic overview of Nemesis in literature and cult, see P. Karanastassi s.v. 'Nemesis' in *LIMC* VI (1992) 733-7.

³⁵ *Hyperdikos*, a superficially paradoxical coinage (can one ever be *too* just?), may suggest that *nemesis* is excessively punitive, indicating at once an awareness of the term's associations with 'righteous indignation' and the excessive harshness associated. Compare H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, trans. M. Hadas and J. Willis (Oxford 1975) in Index B (s.v. ὑπέρδικος), who translates 'standing up for the right', and elaborates (492 n.15): 'Here, and here only, ὑπέρδικος means not ὑπὲρ δίκην but ὑπὲρ δίκης [...] the Hyperboreans are exempt from [*nemesis*] because they do no wrong.' Fränkel thereby follows early Christian commentators who sought to offer a purified notion of *nemesis*, e.g., Schol. *Pi. P.* 10.68a (= 2.247 Drachmann): ὑπέρδικαιοι καὶ κολάζει τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας ἢ Νέμεσις. As C. Brown, 'The Hyperboreans and Nemesis in Pindar's tenth *Pythian*', *Phoenix* 46 (1992) 95-107 (95-96) has noted, the text gives no indication that the Hyperboreans have escaped *nemesis* due to their abstinence from injustices. For the problematic associations of ὑπέρδικος elsewhere see A. Ag. 1395-96 (Clytemnestra, having described the slaughter of Agamemnon, says that 'it would be just, indeed *hyperdikos*' to pour libations over his bloody corpse, were it fitting (πρεπόντως)), S. *Aj.* 1119 (the chorus rebuke Teucer for his

focalization through the eyes of the gods – divine ‘indignation’ at human attempts to usurp a quasi-divine position – was also capable of being focalized through human eyes. From this standpoint, the gods’ insistence that humanity remain in an inferior position – oppressed by toil, war, illness, old-age, and death – looks less like ‘righteous indignation’ and more like the sign of a ‘grudging’ disposition. As argued in an insightful article by Christopher Brown,³⁶ Pindar’s tenth *Pythian* suggests that by the fifth century *nemesis*, like divine *phthonos*, was used to refer to the limitations of the mortal condition – which might, of course, be viewed either as divine oppression or the just divine world-order. Pindar’s other reference to the potentially ‘divided council’ of *nemesis* (*O.* 8.86-7: εὔχομαι ἄμφι καλῶν μοίρῃ νέμεσιν διχόβουλον μὴ θέμεν) likewise suggests that this personification or cosmic force was associated with the mixed lot of humanity, rather than the ‘righteous’ punishment of ‘injustice’. Many centuries later Plutarch’s Aemilius stresses the double-edged nature of fortune’s gifts: they are never *anemesētos* (‘without *nemesis*’); this sense is also attested in the sometime assimilation of the deity Nemesis to Fortuna/Tykhē in the Imperial period and her association with the wheel of fortune.³⁷

Crucially – and in contrast to the established view that Solon talks tactfully of ‘divine *phthonos*’ rather than ‘divine *nemesis*’ because the latter would offend Croesus³⁸ – it is clear that Pindar did not consider *either* notion inappropriate in the encomiastic poetry he composed for and presented to his wealthy and successful aristocratic patrons. That a practising epinician poet airs concerns that *nemesis* might harm his patron poses difficulties for the theory that to talk of *nemesis* was inherently offensive. The view that Solon’s speech is characterized by courtly tact is, in any case, questionable in view of the narrator’s introduction: ‘Solon did not reply sycophantically, but told it how it was’ (Σόλων δὲ οὐδὲν ὑποθωπεύσας ἀλλὰ τῷ ἔοντι χρησάμενος λέγει, 1.30.3). It seems from Croesus’ response to Solon’s words – frustration, displeasure, and the dismissal of Solon from his court – that Herodotus presents Solon giving consistently candid advice to a ruler who has little appetite

harsh words in such bad-circumstances: they ‘bite’, even if *hyperdikos*).

³⁶ Brown, ‘The Hyperboreans’ (n.35, above).

³⁷ Plut. *Aem.* 36.6: ἔτι τὴν Τύχην δι’ ὑποψίας εἶχον, εἰδὼς οὐδὲν εἰλικρινὲς οὐδ’ ἀνεμέσῃτον ἀνθρώποις τῶν μεγάλων χαρίζομένην. See also the *nemesis* of *tykhē* at Aemilius’ success in *Aem.* 22.9 where ‘righteous indignation’ once again is not at issue (Aemilius is, in fact, οὐδενὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐπίφθονον, 34.7): Αἰμυλίῳ μὲν οὖν τὴν τοῦ κατορθώματος νέμεσιν εἰς ἕτερον ἢ τύχῃ καιρὸν ὑπερβαλλομένη, τότε παντελῆ τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀπεδίδου τῆς νίκης. Cf. D. L. Cairns, ‘Exemplarity and narrative in the Greek tradition’, in *Defining Greek narrative*, ed. Cairns and R. Scodel (Edinburgh 2014) 103-36 (esp. 123-26). In a similar vein, νέμεσις τις throws Philopoemen down ‘like an athlete running well towards the end of his life’ (*Philop.* 18). In late Byzantine writers we find total association of divine *phthonos* and *nemesis* (e.g. *VB* 50 = 288.6-9: τὸ τῆς νεμέσεως ... φθονερὸν), on which see M. Hinterberger, ‘Envy and Nemesis in the *Vita Basilii* and Leo the Deacon: literary mimesis or something more?’ *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. R. Macrides (Farnham 2010): 187-203. For the assimilation of Nemesis and Tykhē/Fortuna and the iconography of the wheel of fortune see Karanastassi (n.34, above) 735. Nemesis, it should be stressed, has numerous cultic and conceptual associations in the iconography and literature of post-Classical antiquity, as Karanastassi observes (note Nemesis’ association with, among others, Themis and Adrasteia); there is no question of Nemesis/*nemesis* being exclusively associated with the automatic reversal of human fortune, but this remains an important and often neglected aspect of the concept at most periods.

³⁸ For bibliography see n.24 (above).

for his message (Κροίσος δὲ σπερχθεὶς εἶπε, 1.32.1; ταῦτα λέγων τῷ Κροίσῳ οὐ κως οὔτε ἐχαρίζετο, 1.33).³⁹

Matters have, however, been complicated by Aristotle's revival of *nemesis* as an emotional term (an archaic usage in his day) in the *Eudemian Ethics* and his coinage of the verbal noun τὸ νημεσῶν in the *Rhetoric*.⁴⁰ In his prescriptive and schematic analysis of the emotions felt on observing the success of others, Aristotle opposes *to nemesan* and *phthonos*, the former being pain at another's *undeserved* success and the sign of a good character, the latter being a spiteful resentment of any success in rivals, irrespective of whether it is deserved or not (1386b17-20).⁴¹ But, just as Aristotle's definition of *phthonos* is reductive (though it illustrates the term's prototypical connotations),⁴² classical usage of *nemesis* does not fit the neat ideological oppositions that Aristotle would impose upon *nemesis* and *to nemesan*.

A preliminary survey of the literary evidence, then, suggests that Herodotus' *nemesis* might have a range of meanings aside from 'righteous indignation' (Pelling) and need not imply 'personal responsibility and, indeed, guilt' (Versnel).⁴³ While the usage of *nemesis* as an emotional term in Homer and Aristotle gives some support to its interpretation as 'righteous indignation', Pindaric epinician shows that *nemesis* (as a personification or process) can also refer to a different explanation of human suffering, unconcerned with 'guilt' and 'responsibility' and associated with (rather than opposed to) divine *phthonos*. Herodotus was, like Aristotle and most elite Greeks, a careful reader of Homer,⁴⁴ but – like Pindar and Hesiod and unlike Homer and Aristotle – he does not use *nemesis* as an emotional term.⁴⁵ Given the powerful epinician overtones of Herodotus' warner dialogues – delivered to wealthy and successful monarchs at the height of their good fortune, before the misfortunes of the great Lydian, Samian, and Persian empires – Pindar's fifth-century epinician would seem to be the most relevant window onto the semantics of *nemesis* in

³⁹ Plutarch, too, picked up on Solon's aversion to self-censorship, though unlike Herodotus Plutarch explicitly ascribes to Solon the desire to keep a middle path – neither flattering nor aggravating: ὁ Σόλων, οὔτε κολακεῖν βουλόμενος αὐτὸν οὔτε περαιτέρω παροξύνειν (*Sol.* 27.8). On the Herodotean Solon's truthfulness and lack of tact see also D. Branscome, *Textual rivals: self-presentation in Herodotus* (Ann Arbor 2013) 26-29.

⁴⁰ See Arist. *EE* 1233.b16-34, *Rhet.* 2.10 (=1387b). On the use of *nemesis* as an emotional term see Konstan, *The emotions* (n.25, above) 114.

⁴¹ Rivalry is again stressed at 1387b25.

⁴² Compare the wholly negative definitions of *phthonos* given by Xenophon's Socrates (*Mem.* 3.9.8), Demosthenes (20.139-140), and Plutarch (*Mor.* 518c). As shown by Konstan and by Sanders (n.25, above), the word had a much broader usage.

⁴³ Pelling, 'Educating Croesus' (n.15, above) 150; Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 183-84. Gould, *Herodotus* (n.4, above) 79-80, translates the '*phthoneron* divinity' as 'divine envy' and seems to lean towards interpreting *nemesis* in its Homeric sense ('righteous indignation') but does not commit. 'This *nemesis*' he says 'might perhaps be the "envy" of divinity, but Herodotus does not call it so'. Harrison, *Divinity* (n.6, above) equivocates on whether the narrator's comment on *nemesis* is a confirmation or a contradiction of divine *phthonos*: initially suggesting that *nemesis* is 'validation' (36) he later considers the possibility that the two ideas are 'at variance' (39 n.3). 'Righteous indignation' has, however, become the favoured rendering; cf. Parker, *Athenian religion* (n.34, above) 77-79.

⁴⁴ See B. Sammons, 'History and *hyponoia*: Herodotus and early literary criticism', *Histos* 6 (2012) 52-66.

⁴⁵ The narrator does not say 'god's *nemesis*' but rather 'a great *nemesis* from god'. *Nemesis* must be a process or personification associated with god, not an emotion.

Herodotus. It is also notable that the writing careers of Pindar and Herodotus might just have overlapped, and that the historian cites his older contemporary admiringly (3.38).

In sum, two of the key concepts which are commonly given highly specific meanings – so that *phthonos*, *nemesis*, and *sumphorē* emerge as incompatible or dissonant concepts – are more complex; each (in isolation) might have been used to express a range of theological or philosophical views, with considerable overlap between them.⁴⁶ At this point interpretative methodology takes on particular importance. The consideration of a third key concept will bring this question into sharper focus.

III. Into the Fire

[...] Chance exists not in nature, and cannot coexist with knowledge; it is merely an expression, as Laplace remarked, for our ignorance of the causes in action, and our consequent inability to predict the result [...] ⁴⁷

‘Luck’ and ‘randomness’ are slippery terms. The English words ‘chance’, ‘luck’, ‘random’, and so on may be used in descriptions of specific philosophical doctrines (‘random’, for example, is used both in discussions of non-deterministic quantum processes and more colloquially to indicate the speaker’s belief that there is, in principle, no pattern or meaning to events), but they can also be used to indicate nothing more profound than the speaker’s vague uncertainty or the unexpectedness of an event (by stating that the flip of a coin is ‘random’ I reveal little of my religious or philosophical outlook). What an English speaker intends to communicate by using the words ‘lucky’ or ‘random’ will thus depend on their wider metaphysical views and the specific conversational context. The latter is particularly important because speakers of all metaphysical persuasions are able to move in and out of different uses depending on the demands of the situation and the audience: a Calvinist may in principle accept that the future and past are entirely determined by God’s will and deny that anything is truly ‘random’ (in the sense of being undetermined or pointless), but may nevertheless be capable – like Jevons and other material determinists – of describing an unplanned meeting with a friend as a ‘chance encounter’ or exculpating a guest’s breaking of a tea cup by describing it as ‘bad luck’.⁴⁸ Often such formulaic and every-day terms tell us nothing about a speaker’s world-view.

As such, the semantic content of a ‘luck’ statement is unusually difficult to access. Interpreting such a statement is a complex linguistic and philosophical challenge, and requires us to consider the wider metaphysical views which the speaker expresses, and the context in which the word occurs. The same considerations apply in studying ancient Greek

⁴⁶ Like *nemesis*, *phthonos* undergoes significant development between Homeric and classical usage, moving from being a largely neutral term in Homer (something like ‘refuse’, with the probable exception of *Od.* 18.15–18) to its mostly (if not uniformly) pejorative sense in the classical period; cf. Konstan, *The Emotions* (n.25, above) 118–21.

⁴⁷ W. S. Jevons, *The principles of science* (London 1874) 198. For ancient discussions of chance as *inter alia* cause obscure to human reason and uncaused cause see, e.g., Arist. *Met.* 5 1025a25, Alexander of Aphrodisias *De anima* 179.6 and *De fato* 8.174.1.

⁴⁸ The common scientific use of ‘random’ to refer to *designed* systems (e.g. a ‘randomized’ test) shows that, in considered contexts in modern English, the word ‘random’ need have no relationship to the speaker’s beliefs about a number of metaphysical issues. For various scientific concepts of ‘randomness’ see A. Eagle, ‘Randomness is unpredictability’, *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 56 (2005) 749–90 (755–56).

texts. In seeking to understand the word τύχη on a newly-discovered papyrus nothing could be more relevant than whether the speaker is an Epicurean discoursing on atomic swerve, a Stoic expounding the non-existence of chance, or an epic bard describing the unknowable events allotted to each man on his birth by the Fates. To attempt to establish a single, context-free meaning behind all ‘luck’ vocabulary used by a single speaker would be grossly to simplify the nature of speech and thought, and scholars armed with such unrealistic expectations long struggled to cope with the fact that ancient authors use τύχη in several distinct ways.⁴⁹

In interpreting the words τύχη and συμφορή in Solon’s speech, therefore, we must explore Herodotus’ usage of these terms elsewhere, seek to establish his wider theological views, and attempt to establish the relevant linguistic and performative context.⁵⁰ As with *phthonos* and *nemesis*, Versnel (like Gould) associates Herodotus’ luck-vocabulary (τύχη and συμφορή) with a fairly specific metaphysical position (that events are fundamentally ‘arbitrary’, that fortune works in two directions, and that it thus belongs in a different ‘category’ from divine *phthonos*), despite dissonance with the surrounding context.⁵¹ But any attempt to draw a permanent line between ‘the gods’ and ‘luck’ in the *Histories* is problematized by his use of expressions like ‘by chance and the actions of god’ (κατὰ συντυχίην θεοῦ ποιεῦντος, 9.91.1).⁵² It is here that the methodology employed by Gould and Versnel – interpreting individual words without allowing the immediate context to inform the interpretative process – can be questioned. Both begin by postulating the incoherence of ‘proverbial’ thought, then class individual parts of Solon’s speech as proverbial, and so analyse the constituent parts independently. In order to appreciate why they adopt this methodology we must contextualize their approach to ancient religion, which draws upon methodological approaches pioneered in anthropology and the history of ideas.

IV. Genealogizing a Methodology⁵³

The study of Greek religion was long conducted by humanist scholars with a deep familiarity with Christian theology and a love of Greek literature. In an age when the erudite zealously

⁴⁹ For a doxography and discussion of Polybius’ use of τύχη see L. I. Hau, ‘*Tychē* in Polybios: narrative answers to a philosophical question’, *Histos* 5 (2011) 183-207.

⁵⁰ See E. Eidinow, *Luck, fate, and fortune: antiquity and its legacy* (Oxford 2011) 105-15 for a brief examination of Herodotus’ τύχ- vocabulary. For the use of *sumphorē* in the Croesus logos, see n.81 (below).

⁵¹ Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) returns to these concepts several times, with some variation. At 183, 187, 528-29 Versnel argues in detail that Herodotus’ concepts of *sumphorē* and *tarkhōdēs* refer to ‘ephemeral chance’, ‘arbitrary chance’ or ‘arbitrariness of the gods’ and that this is ‘different’ to (if not necessarily exclusive of) divine *phthonos*. Later (279-80) Versnel opposes the various ways in which the gods might act in Herodotus to Luck (seemingly personified): ‘Tuche is essentially an arbitrary and capricious power in accordance with her nature: Fortune, Luck, Chance’. Elsewhere (178) Versnel lists as ‘three different, mutually contradictory concepts’: ‘unpredictable destiny, fate or chance’, ‘an arbitrary rule of supernatural agents referred to as Zeus, the god or the gods’ and ‘the justice of a supreme divine being’. For Gould’s claim that συμφορή and τὸ ταραχῶδες [*sic*] refer to ‘randomness and unpredictability’ that is incompatible with divine *phthonos*, see n.66 (below).

⁵² This is, indeed, the argument offered by Estienne to demonstrate that by ‘divine chance’ (θεῖη τύχη) Herodotus meant nothing other than divine providence, that is to say ‘divine fate’ (θεῖη μοῖρα), *Henrici Stephani Apologia pro Herodoto [...] nach der Erstausgabe (Genf 1566) [...]*, trans. J. Krammer (Meisenheim am Glan 1980) 28. Further examples of the conjunction of ‘god’ and ‘chance’ in Herodotus include the expression ‘by divine chance’ (θεῖη τύχη and variants: 1.126.6, 4.8.3, 5.92.γ3; though here the meaning of θεῖος may not be so straightforward).

⁵³ This section selectively explores the intellectual origins of a particular interpretative methodology. It is by no

collected proverbs, Henri Estienne surpassed most contemporaries in his passion for ancient maxims and in his subtle understanding of their semantics. A scholar of Christian and classical texts, Estienne published Calvin's commentaries on the Bible and his *Rudimenta fidei Christianae* three years before his *Apologia pro Herodoto* (1566).⁵⁴ In the latter he conducted an extensive analysis of Herodotus' religious beliefs by collecting and creatively synthesizing the historian's many *sententiae* to show that the first Greek historian believed in divine providence, predestination, and the ubiquity of God's justice.⁵⁵ In his attempt to extract a coherent and respectable theological position from the *Histories*, Estienne set the pattern for many Herodotean scholars until the rise of an anthropological methodology in the late nineteenth century, which would gradually come to influence classicists and theologians who studied Greek religion.

Although some scholars today, as at all periods, continue to employ a methodology not dissimilar to that of Estienne, the genealogy of today's scholar of ancient religion goes back to a very different source, one which evolved in conscious opposition to such 'theological' and 'humanistic' approaches – namely anthropologists who began, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, to study the 'primitive' religion of 'uncivilized' man, wary of subjecting the beliefs of contemporary savages to the philosophical and theological rationalizations of more advanced European cultures.⁵⁶ Leading anthropological field-workers of the early and mid-twentieth century rejected the patronizing tone of their predecessors but, in self-conscious contrast to contemporary theologians, aimed at a descriptive realism and consciously avoided imposing coherence upon the religious systems they studied.⁵⁷

For over a century most scholars of Greek religion have sought a more 'realistic' vision of the religious mind (contemporary as well as ancient), and vehemently decried attempts to impose external coherence upon the contradictions believed to be inherent to

means offered as a potted history of scholarship on Herodotus or Greek religion.

⁵⁴ Details of Estienne's publications in J. Kecskeméti, B. Boudou, and H. Cazes, *La France des humanistes. Henri II Estienne, éditeur et écrivain* (Turnhout 2003).

⁵⁵ Estienne, *Apologia* (n.52, above) 18: 'Multae enim sententiae siue γνῶμαι tum quas aliis locis adhibuit, tum quas narrationibus vel praefixit, vel tanquam corollaria adiunxit, tanta illum pietate praeditum fuisse testantur quanta in hominem Christianae religionis ignarum cadere potest.' On Estienne's reading of Herodotus' theology see Ellis, 'Herodotus and God' (n.2, above).

⁵⁶ In Tylor's view the lower systems of animism provided 'a crude childlike natural philosophy', see E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, 2 vols (London 1871) II 327. R. R. Marett, *Faith, hope, and charity in primitive religion* (New York 1932) 7-9, supported Lévy-Bruhl's description of 'uncivilized' people as 'prelogical': 'primitive man is articulate after his own fashion [...] Rhythm serves him in lieu of reasoning.'

⁵⁷ See, e.g., E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, oracles and magic among the Azande* (Oxford 1937) 475-78; *Nuer religion* (Oxford 1956) 318-19. G. Lienhardt, *Divinity and experience: the religion of the Dinka* (Oxford 1961) resists 'attempts to produce an account, however lucid and ingenious, of a kind of Dinka "creed" and pantheon'; he observes that 'The Western Dinka cannot give an account of Divinity and the free-divinities, in their relationships and in their differences, more consistent and expository than that represented above'. Versnel too stresses the importance of this anthropological practice in *Coping* (n.6, above) 194-95.

and particularly characteristic of religious thought. In 1931 Wilamowitz voiced a common view when he wrote, apropos of the contradictions in Herodotus' religious outlook, that:⁵⁸

[...] There are always many people who never become aware of the contradictions in their inner relationship to religion or in their world-views, and never once wish to become aware of them.

The prevailing opinion amongst scholars of ancient religion today – and the explicit contention of Versnel – is that, in analysing the historical or religious beliefs of theists, the analyst should operate with a *presumption* of inconsistency. 'Inconsistencies in belief are not just an inevitable flaw of all religions', Harrison writes in his discussion of Herodotean religion, 'but actually a means whereby belief is maintained'.⁵⁹ So framed, the task of scholarly analysis necessarily includes the elaboration of the logical inconsistencies that render a fantastical theological system 'sustainable' in the light of the empirical disproof it must inevitably have faced (an approach Harrison borrows from Evans-Prichard, and traces to E. B. Tylor).⁶⁰ Gould's work on Greek religion is strongly influenced by Lienhardt's study of the Dinka of southern Sudan, for whom, in Lienhardt's view, divinity is a reflection of human experience – precisely not systematized and neat, but individual and varied.⁶¹

Versnel draws both on the anthropological approach to the study of religious mentalities and on criticisms of the 'myth of coherence' among theorists of intellectual history. It is not, on this view, the task of the historian to forge a 'stable, well-considered, and consistent doctrine' from the texts under consideration; those who do so suffer from the 'strain towards congruence'.⁶² To illustrate his vision of ancient religious thought – characterized by *gnomologisches Wissen* – Versnel describes a personal encounter with a Greek lady who

⁵⁸ U. v. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, 2 vols (Berlin 1931-32), II 207: '[... daß] es immer zahlreiche Menschen gibt, die sich der Widersprüche in ihrem inneren Verhalten zu der Religion oder auch der Weltanschauung gar nicht bewußt werden, nicht einmal bewußt werden wollen'. Herodotus' use of both τὸ θεῖον and individual personal deities is cited as one of several *Widersprüche* which, Wilamowitz argues, the historian shared with his entire generation. Cf. I. M. Linforth, 'Greek Gods and Foreign Gods in Herodotus', *UCPCP* 9 (1926) 1-25 (25): 'The human mind, in operating with the concepts of religion, can seldom maintain for any length of time a uniform bearing, whether of reason or of emotion. We should not be surprised, therefore, to find contradictions in the mind of Herodotus [...]'; G. de Ste Croix, 'Herodotus', *G&R* 24 (1977) 130-48 (139).

⁵⁹ Harrison, *Divinity* (n.6, above) 16, 116; cf. Hau, *The Changeability of fortune* (n.6, above) 157.

⁶⁰ T. Harrison, 'Greek Religion and Literature', in *Companion to Greek religion*, ed. D. Ogden (Oxford 2007) 373-84, explores how the belief that 'all unjust acts are punished by divine intervention' was rendered sustainable by 'blocks to falsifiability' or 'let-out clauses'. Compare 375-80 with the twenty-two points noted by Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft* (n.57, above) 475-80. Similar interests characterize Harrison, *Divinity* (n.6, above).

⁶¹ There are clear conceptual and verbal echoes between Lienhardt's discussion of the 'evocation of the notion of Divinity by paradoxes and contraries of experience' and Gould, *Herodotus* (n.4, above), ch. 4 ('Why things happen') and Gould, 'On Making sense' (n.14, above). Cf. Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience* (n.57, above) 54-55 and n.66 (below).

⁶² Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 190-91; cf. Q. Skinner, 'Meaning and understanding in the history of ideas', *H&T* 8 (1969) 3-53.

rapidly invoked numerous explanations for a tragedy earlier that day, the drowning of a young girl.⁶³

In an avalanche of words she explained that this was a *punishment* by God, that it was the *will* of God, that it *was written* (γραμμένον εἶναι), that those *whom* God *loves* die young. What can we do? (τί να κάνουμε;). The baffling thing was that these different explanations – multiple, different and *in my view* partly discordant – were presented not as discursive alternatives open for discussion or rational choice, but in an asyndetic chain of assertions.

Versnel offers this string of apparently discordant gnomic expressions as the modern analogue for the religious thought of Herodotus, Solon, and Hesiod. In this context Versnel's reluctance to see the unity of Solon's speech to Croesus seems reasonable, applying the rigours of the scientific, anthropological study of religion to ancient texts. By this and other parallels to modern religious thought Versnel stresses the foreignness of archaic and modern religious thought and 'proverbial' folk thought, proposing that we should not judge the ancient Greek by 'our modern paradigm' (a logical one based on the principle of non-contradiction derived from Aristotle); instead we should judge the religious archaic Greek by 'his own' paradigm, which tolerates 'contradiction, incongruity and inconsistency'.⁶⁴

The anthropological study of religion, then, provides the theoretical background to the approach of both Gould and Versnel.⁶⁵ Yet Versnel's claim that it is methodologically unsound to attempt to find 'coherence' by 'making sense' of the various ideas in Herodotus does not take into account the way in which people come to an understanding of words. All verbal communication in fact relies on the interpreter initially *attempting* to 'make sense' out of ambiguous symbols by placing them in a meaningful relation to one another. The question is not *whether* one attempts to makes sense, but rather *how* one attempts it, for there is no fixed 'meaning' inside any word or proverb that can be extracted without

⁶³ Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 218 (his italics) and note also the following discussion. This contrasts neatly with another 'real life' example of proverb usage brought up by Estienne, illustrating their opposing approaches. To counter the argument that Herodotus' statements about 'luck' undermine his belief in divine providence, Estienne cites a contemporary French proverb in which the same tension is at evidence: *C'est fortune: Dieu le ueult*. Estienne, by contrast, not unreasonably takes it as a given that a 16th-century Frenchman who voices this proverb is not uttering a nonsensical statement, but rather using 'fortune' in a way that does not exclude the will of God (e.g. in a manner roughly equivalent to 'providence'). Cf. Estienne, *Apologia* (n.52, above) 28.

⁶⁴ Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 7-8. Despite Versnel's resistance to pronouncing the Greeks 'desperately alien' – *Coping*, 11-16 – this portion of his analysis seems to do so: all parallels for the Greek 'paratactic' (rather than 'syntactic') thought are chosen from the folksy or the faithful. Contrast, however, his approach in *Ter Unus* (n.11, above) 4-18 where inconsistency is presented as a *universal* phenomenon (although here, too, 'it is again religion that offers the most striking instances' (8)). There is a tension in Versnel's writings between the contention that the ability to tolerate inconsistency is a universal feature of humanity, and the contention that it constitutes the key difference between the ancient Greeks' mental habits and 'our own' ('we' are presumably atheist academics). Since the latter view is plainly stated and particularly important in the discussion of Herodotus, I take that to be Versnel's position here.

⁶⁵ Compare, however, the caution shown towards defining the terms *kwoth*, *Macardit*, and *Deng* in Nuer and Dinka religion in Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft* (n.57, above) vi, Lienhardt, *Divinity and Experience* (n.57, above) 81, 91-93.

an understanding of the linguistic culture that created it and an attempt to recreate the intentions of the speaker.

The theoretical problems can, perhaps, best be illustrated at a micro-level. In arguing that Solon's speech does not present a 'unified and structured set of ideas', Gould claims, as we have seen, that divine *phthonos* is 'predictable', and thus incompatible with the idea of god's "disruptiveness" (*to tarakhōdes*) and the recurring idea of "chance" [which] seemingly stress the randomness and unpredictability of divine intervention'. Gould (followed by Versnel) thus separates the two adjectives Solon uses to describe 'the divinity' – *phthoneros* and *tarakhōdēs* – and analyses each in isolation so as to conclude that Solon is evoking two 'incompatible' conceptions of divinity within the same breath; indeed, Gould argues that the two concepts sum up the 'paradoxical' nature of divinity in Greek thought.⁶⁶ Yet to do so neglects the principle that, in coming to an understanding of a sentence, each word influences the way we interpret the others. Versnel offers a philological justification for Gould's claims, arguing that the conjunction-group *τε καί* (which joins *phthoneros* to *tarakhōdēs*) never has an 'epexegetic' function in Herodotus and is rather 'connective' or 'paratactic', 'connecting two independent notions of equal standing'. In this case, Versnel argues, the two notions have 'different implications'.⁶⁷

Such linguistic arguments will not do. If, for example, I say 'leave Frank alone: he's sad and angry' my conversant would not typically take the isolated phrases 'Frank is sad' and 'Frank is angry' and then add the separate meaning of each together so as to conclude that my sentence is nonsensical. 'Sadness' and 'anger' can be framed in such a way as to exclude one another, but these emotions can also overlap and combine, and it is here that the search for congruence, at its most basic level, is a fundamental feature of all successful verbal communication. Although the conjunction 'and' is being used paratactically rather than in a purely epexegetical fashion – that is to say, 'angry' is an additional idea, not simply an elaboration of 'sad' – it is deeply counter-intuitive to interpret each word independently. Outside peculiar interpretative contexts like cryptic crosswords we only abandon the attempt to put adjacent words into a meaningful relationship if we believe our conversant to have a poor grasp of the language in question, to be insane, or to have changed topic or opinion mid-speech. In the normal process of interpretation, the first adjective establishes a framework within which the second is understood.⁶⁸

Approaching Solon's statements about 'the divine' as we would an English speaker's statement about Frank, above, we might conclude that Herodotus intended Solon's words

⁶⁶ Gould, we should note, changes Solon's adjective (*ταραχώδης*) into an abstract noun (*τὸ ταραχώδες*). In Solon's formulation, however, the two adjectives (*phthoneros* and *tarakhōdēs*) are only separated (or rather connected) by *τε καί*. Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 528-29 considers *phthoneros* and *tarakhōdēs* not to be 'exclusive', but to have 'different implications': 'Divine envy always and inevitably results in doom, is typically human/anthropomorphic in its motivation and hence predictable, especially as a satisfactory staff to beat a very rich dog. *Ταραχώδες*, on the other hand, represents the random, confusing, and disruptive, but not rationally reducible side of the supernatural and it is as such used *inter alia* to predicate *tyche* (LSJ)'. Gould, 'On Making sense' (n.14, above) 29, 32, argued for a similar contradiction in these same words, which encapsulate the two sides of Greek religion – order and disorder: 'the essence of divinity lies in the paradoxical coexistence of incompatible truths about human experience'.

⁶⁷ Versnel justifies his interpretative approach at length in *Coping* (n.6, above) 528.

⁶⁸ S. E. Asch, 'Forming Impressions of Personality', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 41 (1946) 258-90 (270-73) illustrates how adjectives describing a personality influence one another in forming an impression of that personality. Particularly striking is the importance of the order in which they are encountered, cf. D. Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (London 2011) 82.

to mean that the divinity is grudging (*phthoneron*), and that its grudgingness is all the more threatening because it interferes in human affairs at the drop of a hat (being *tarakhōdes*, ‘meddlesome’ or ‘troubling’). The *φθον-* and *ταραχ-* roots are often used in tandem in Greek thought in reference to both human and divine dispositions;⁶⁹ no reason has been advanced to suspect that the words referred to mutually exclusive attributes.

Gould’s and Versnel’s criticisms of the relatively common assumption that a perfectly coherent theological system pervades the entire *Histories* represent an important contribution to Herodotean scholarship.⁷⁰ But, by adopting a directly opposing methodology and declining to ‘make sense’ of any of Herodotus’ metaphysical statements, Versnel and Gould encounter problems of equal gravity. If we are to come to an interpretation of Solon’s speech that can satisfy the anthropologist and the historian of ideas, questions of interpretative methodology require further consideration.

V. The Frying Pan

To turn, briefly, to other interpretative methodologies common in Herodotean scholarship, an extreme ‘strain towards coherence’ of the sort eloquently criticized by Versnel is common in literary scholarship, where critics rarely share the anthropologist’s caution about *imposing* order on the thought-system under investigation. In presenting the ‘justice of Zeus’ as the central theme of Greek literature Hugh Lloyd-Jones writes:⁷¹

In the *Iliad* once the gods have determined to destroy a man they see to it that he decides disastrously, and so also in Herodotus; but neither in the *Iliad* nor in Herodotus do they destroy him without just cause.

In defending this programmatic assertion about ‘divine’ or ‘reciprocal justice’ Lloyd-Jones lays claim to a remarkable interpretative prerogative: to deduce from the presence of some ‘crime-punishment’ narratives in the *Histories* that all misfortunes are ‘just’ divine punishment for a ‘crime’. Even if Herodotus sometimes mentions no crime when describing a god-sent misfortune, Lloyd-Jones suggests, we should assume that Herodotus viewed this as a punishment for a prior, unmentioned crime.⁷² In asserting the immunity of his thesis from textual contradiction, Lloyd-Jones follows where Heinrich Meuss led almost a century earlier when, in an attempt to prove that the *Histories* was structured around the principle

⁶⁹ P. I. 7.39: ὁ δ’ ἀθανάτων μὴ *θρασέτω φθόνος*, Hdt. 1.32: ἐπιστάμενόν με τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐν *φθονερὸν* τε καὶ *ταραχῶδες* (cf. Hdt. 1.44.1: ὁ δὲ Κροῖσος τῷ θανάτῳ τοῦ παιδὸς *συντεταραγμένος*), Hdt. 7.46.3-4: αἱ νοῦσοι *συνταράσσουσιν* [...] ὁ δὲ θεὸς [...] *φθονερός* [...] εὐρίσκεται ἐὼν, Arist. *Rhet.* 1386b.17-20: λύπη μὲν γὰρ *ταραχῶδης* καὶ ὁ *φθόνος* ἐστίν. Cf. Plut. *Non poss. suav.* 1102d-e (rejecting divine *φθόνος* and at the same time the notion that god is *ταρακτικόν*).

⁷⁰ For criticisms of the widespread ‘strain towards congruence’ see, in addition to the next section, Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) *passim* and 160 n.27.

⁷¹ H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus*, 2nd ed. (1983) 63-64.

⁷² Lloyd-Jones, *Justice* (n.71, above) 67-68: ‘[...] it often happens in Herodotus that part of a causal chain can be observed, but that its beginning is not there. That may be because the historian is not able to supply it or because he does not feel obliged to; but so many causal chains of crime and punishment are shown in their full extent that it is not safe to conclude that Herodotus thought that the beginning did not exist’.

of divine justice, he claimed that the basic principle of Herodotean theology was that every character gets what they deserve.⁷³

It is clear that attention to detail suffers in such attempts to prove that every Herodotean narrative is structured around this unvarying didactic message. Herodotus never commits to such a moralizing agenda, and (as many have acknowledged) many Herodotean narratives have a far more tragic tone. It may be the very volume of didactic and moral material in the *Histories* that has seduced so many commentators into attempting to prove that the work is, after all, consistently structured around the theme of 'divine justice', and sought to establish a corresponding analysis of the 'programmatic' dialogue between Solon and Croesus.

The narrator's comment on *nemesis* (1.34) presents no problems: as we have seen, Aristotelian and Homeric usage have long been used (questionably, but not implausibly) to justify the translation of *nemesis* as 'righteous divine indignation', a small step from 'divine justice'. Within the rich history of Christianizing and Platonizing scholarship the traditional means of linking divine *phthonos* to divine justice has been to focus on those instances where this *phthonos* is presented as a response to 'arrogance', *hybris*, or 'thinking big', as in Artabanus' speech to Xerxes in the war council (7.10ε). The argument – a staple of apologetic treatises on Greek religion from the time of Lodewijk Valckenaer (1715-1785) – typically runs as follows: 'arrogance' (traditionally, in the scholarship, called *hybris*) necessarily leads the individual in question to commit 'injustice' which requires the gods to apply punitive 'justice'; divine *phthonos* (= resentment of arrogance) is thus shown to be a central component of 'divine justice'.⁷⁴ This is broadly compatible with (if not a sensitive exegesis of) some classical usages of divine *phthonos*, but cannot account for numerous other examples. Even where there is a reasonable fit, the process of tacitly translating divine *phthonos* into juridical vocabulary and formalizing its operation into a 'schema' never voiced by the author in question (whether 'crime-punishment' or '*hybris-nemesis*') is a dubious contribution to our understanding of the *Histories* in literary, theological, or anthropological terms.

The inadequacy of the '*hybris-phthonos*' thesis (which invariably purports to be an exhaustive analysis of the classical concept of divine *phthonos*) emerges from its inability to account for one of the five speeches on divine *phthonos* in Herodotus' *Histories* (where divine *phthonos* occurs more than in any other extant author). In Artabanus' speech to Xerxes at Abydos divine *phthonos* is causally linked to the pitiful condition of humanity: *all* humans must suffer misfortune and illness, and *everyone* longs to die several times in their life, 'thus god, having given a taste of the sweet life, has been discovered to be *phthoneros* in his giving' (7.46). There is no room here for divine *phthonos* as a response (just or otherwise) to human action: it applies to all. Most studies of divine *phthonos* over the last three centuries have zealously sought to reconcile the idea with 'divine justice' or 'reciprocity' and, without exception, these have failed to acknowledge the insurmountable problem posed by Artabanus' speech at Abydos (most simply omit it from discussion). That

⁷³ Meuss, *Neid der Götter* (n.29, above) 11: 'Nach demselben Grundsatz der Vergeltung richtet sich nun auch das Walten der Götter: dem Guten, Gerechten ergeht es gut, dem Frevler schlimm. Beide Gedanken sind dem Schriftsteller so selbstverständlich, dass er sie – in dieser einfachsten Form wenigstens – nie besonders ausspricht [...]', cf. 13 n.2.

⁷⁴ Attempts to reconcile divine justice and divine *phthonos*: for the eighteenth and nineteenth century see n.29 (above); see also E. Fraenkel, *Aeschylus Agamemnon*, 3 vols (Oxford 1950) II 349-50, Cairns in '*Hybris*' (n.24, above) 17-22 (esp. 20), and nn.76-8 (below).

the *Histories* contains a point-blank refutation of the popular thesis that divine *phthonos* always responds to *hybris* neatly illustrates the dangers of the ‘strain towards congruence’.⁷⁵

Lloyd-Jones’ analysis of divine *phthonos* ultimately relies on one version of the developmental interpretation proposed by Erwin Rohde at the turn of the twentieth century:⁷⁶ ‘in Aeschylus, as in Herodotus and Pindar, the primitive concept of divine envy has undergone refinement’, and in these authors, as in Euripides, ‘[divine] *phthonos* actually formed part of justice’.⁷⁷ This equation of divine *phthonos* with divine justice continues to be taken for granted by many commentators, and has been actively defended by every dedicated study of divine *phthonos* since the start of the twentieth century with one exception.⁷⁸ The equation of all the metaphysical forces in the *Histories* under the heading ‘divine justice’, in turn, provides the basic theological framework for many literary studies of Herodotean narrative patterns and characterization. Arguably, by encouraging a monolithic conception of the divine as a force in human history, this view perpetuates the widespread unwillingness to acknowledge other aspects of the *Histories* which challenge the hermeneutic primacy of ‘divine justice’, most obviously a handful of passages where the gods lead, deceive, or bully human protagonists into disastrous, impious, or criminal action through oracles and dreams (cf. 1.53, 66.3, 75.2, 2.139, 7.12-18).⁷⁹

VI. Conclusion

The criticism of the ‘drive towards coherence’ is, as the last section has attempted to stress, an extremely valuable contribution to scholarship. But if it is to be accepted, it must be recognized that one can avoid the pitfalls of the drive towards coherence without declining to ‘make sense’ of adjacent and closely related statements like ‘the divine is *phthoneron* and *tarakhōdes*’ and ‘man is entirely *sumphorē*’. Indeed, as already intimated, some attempt to ‘make sense’ is both unavoidable and methodologically desirable. Writing against

⁷⁵ Artabanus’ speech at Abydos is, however, also used as the basis for the competing view of divine *phthonos* popular among theorists of primitive religion, anthropologists, and a minority of classical scholars since the mid-eighteenth century; see, e.g., in addition to n.29, E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the irrational* (Berkeley 1951) 29-30; M. W. Dickie, ‘Lo φθόνος degli dèi nella letteratura greca del quinto secolo avanti Cristo’, *AdR* 32 (1987) 113-25; D. Asheri *Book I* in D. Asheri, A. Lloyd, and A. Corcella, *A commentary on Herodotus books I-IV* (Oxford 2007) 39-40. In recent decades only studies which performatively renounce ‘coherence’ take Artabanus’ comments at 7.46 into account. Those who reject the attempted reconciliation of divine *phthonos* and divine justice usually tend, naturally perhaps, to assume the opposite position: that divine *phthonos* is logically exclusive of any connection between the gods and justice (and thus also that a god who is *phthoneros* would not punish injustice).

⁷⁶ E. Rohde, ‘Die Religion der Griechen’, in his *Kleine Schriften* (Tübingen & Leipzig 1901) II 328-30.

⁷⁷ Lloyd-Jones, *Justice* (n.71, above) 69-70 (citing E. *IA*. 1089-97).

⁷⁸ The sole exception known to me is Dickie, ‘Lo φθόνος’ (n.75, above); see, with n.74 (above), P. Bulman, *Phthonos in Pindar* (Berkeley 1992) 1, 11-12, who views divine *phthonos* as identical to *nemesis* and connected to ‘justice’: ‘the gods’ righteous and corrective indignation’. Many other studies assume this position: C. Darbo-Peschanski, *Le discours du particulier: Essai sur l’enquête hérodotéenne* (Paris 1987) 54-74 uses ‘la justice divine’ and ‘la jalousie des dieux’ interchangeably (e.g. 65-66); H. Löffler, *Fehlentscheidungen bei Herodot* (Tübingen 2008) 187, talks only of ‘den Neid der Götter und deren bestrafendes Eingreifen’; Konstan, *The emotions* (n.25, above) 124, 127, suggests that divine *phthonos* is ‘top-down indignation’ and ‘divine displeasure at human immoderation’ associated with those who ‘get above themselves’.

⁷⁹ This topic is far too expansive to discuss here, and I hope to address it in detail elsewhere – for some brief comments see Ellis, ‘Herodotus and God’ (n.2, above) nn.35, 73, apropos of humanist commentators who likewise sought ‘divine justice’ at the expense of all other narrative patterns.

linguistic contextualists (particularly Skinner and Pocock), Mark Bevir has recently made a convincing case that the interpreter must *presume* coherence when looking at several utterances by a single person, whether in different texts written at different periods, or within the same text, and in doing so Bevir identifies several philosophical problems in the contextualist theory.⁸⁰ Essentially, to presume incoherence is not to assume that all people (theists or not) are consistent, but rather to recognize that if we, as hearers/readers/analysts, suspend the prior presumption of coherence which normally operates during all communication, it will be impossible for us to arrive at a satisfactory analysis. Many texts will not have coherent answers to all the questions we may ask of them, and the plausibility of any proposed interpretation can be debated. There are, moreover, plenty of ways to put any two words together, especially in ancient texts where contemporary attestations of key words are scarce (e.g. *nemesis* or *atē* in Herodotus), where words have lots of potential meanings (e.g. the twin senses of *συμφορῇ*, ‘chance’ and ‘disaster’, on which Herodotus’ narrative plays), and where the tone is self-consciously poetic, using the stylized and archaic vocabulary appropriate to a given literary genre.⁸¹ Subjectivity in coming to an understanding is, then, inevitable. But initially attempting to ‘make sense’ – that is, to put adjacent and conceptually similar ideas in relation to one another on the assumption that the speaker/author is capable of coherent thought – is the *only* approach that does not beg the question. It is the interpreter’s job to seek a coherent position and to document that attempt before they announce incoherence and pronounce the speaker’s words logically incompatible. An interpreter who begins by looking for incoherence can only find what they seek.

In the case at hand – Solon’s dialogue with Croesus – a consideration of contemporary linguistic evidence makes it clear that there is space for a coherent reading to emerge, if nowhere so narrow as the unusually specific metaphysical doctrines which Gould, Pelling, and Versnel see in various parts of Solon’s speech, which would constrain the movement of fortune to a specific group, a specific direction, or alternately require the presence (or absence) of factors like ‘arrogance’, ‘guilt’, or ‘crime’. The comparative generality of the concept is suitable given its content, and it is anything but novel. At its centre is the instability and unpredictability of success and the inevitability of misfortune in human life, correspondingly greater according to the good fortune previously enjoyed. Herodotus thus appropriates a self-consciously epinician discourse in expressing this idea, namely the language of divine *phthonos* and *nemesis*; the former is only used in the speeches of his characters to mighty monarchs whose fortunes are at their peak (*akmē*, cf. 1.29.1, ἀκμαζούσας) and consequently ready for a reversal. In his work and elsewhere in fifth-century lyric, tragedy, and historiography, divine *phthonos* is associated with the reversal of fortune that meets successful monarchs and athletes who are particularly blessed (*olbios*) or with those who think or act in a conspicuously conceited or self-satisfied manner.⁸²

Whatever our views on Herodotus’ literal commitment to the notion that the divine is *phthoneron* and *tarakhōdes* as a piece of theology (the words are never repeated by the narrator), the ideas present no inconsistency with the surrounding themes including Croesus’ inflated self-conception and consequent misfortunes, the narrator’s comment on

⁸⁰ See M. Bevir, ‘Mind and method in the history of ideas’, *H&T* 36 (1997) 167-89 (183-86).

⁸¹ On *sumphorē* see, especially, C. C. Chiasson, ‘Herodotus’ use of Attic tragedy in the Lydian *Logos*’, *ClAnt* 22 (2003) 5-35 (15).

⁸² A. Ag. 946-47, 904; Pi. P. 8.71-72, P. 10.20-22, O. 13.24-25, cf. Thuc. 7.77.3.

‘*nemesis* from god’, and many of Solon’s statements: ‘man is entirely chance/disaster’, no man can possess all goods, and it is necessary to suspend final judgment on a man’s good fortune until the end of his life.⁸³

Finally, it is important not to elide the distinction between ideas that are ‘dissonant’ (or ‘incoherent’) and ideas that are ‘different’, though these are, admittedly, imprecise terms.⁸⁴ The belief that god is ‘grudging and troublesome’ is certainly compatible with the belief that ‘man is entirely misfortune/chance’ (*sumphorē*), despite the fact that these two ideas are not identical. It is perfectly unremarkable, for Solon, in explaining a vision of the human condition, to mention several *different* but mutually reinforcing ideas. Yet the fact that his two-page speech contains more than one idea implies no major difference between Herodotus’ mode of thought and our own.

There can be little argument with Gould’s comment that Herodotus’ thoughts on historical causation as expressed in Solon’s speech are not a ‘theory’ in the precise sense that Gould gives the term. But to expect a theory of this sort may be to misunderstand the nature of Solon’s words, which do not attempt to give the proximate historical cause that precipitates every individual reversal of fortune, but to voice general principles that hold good throughout the work. As I hope to have shown, the individual *gnōmai* Solon expresses, well known to his contemporaries and common in the genres of lyric, epinician, and tragedy, present a coherent and powerful vision of the nature of human life and the historical process.

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⁸³ To digress slightly, the same cannot be said for the theological ideas in the Delphic oracle’s pronouncement about the ‘predestined fate’ established by the Moirai (Fates) which the gods cannot avert (1.91). This theological vision, reminiscent of epic, is also carefully embedded in Herodotus’ narrative (*cf.* 1.13) but has almost no common ground with Solon’s speech on the nature of human fortune, as rightly observed by Versnel, *Coping* (n.6, above) 530-31.

⁸⁴ For Versnel’s definition of ‘inconsistency’ see *Ter Unus* (n.11, above) 4: ‘It embraces such (equally vague, but sometimes more restricted) notions as incompatibility, discrepancy, incongruity, lack of harmony, anomaly and ambiguity’. There is obviously a huge distance between ‘lack of harmony’ – *e.g.* the association of ideas normally kept separate, something we might expect to encounter in examining any text produced in a different culture – and ‘incompatibility’.

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Herodotus on Lust*

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SUMMARY: The account of mutual abductions that is found at the start of Herodotus's *Histories* occupies a prominent place because the historian wishes to begin with stories exemplifying a basic determinant of human behavior that is generally felt to require no special explanation, namely acquisitiveness, which is conflated with sexual desire. This conflation, which is shown to be pervasive in Greek thought, is clear from the very start, where the abduction of Io for seemingly commercial purposes is followed by three abductions in which the sexual motivation is increasingly apparent.

THE OPENING OF HERODOTUS'S *HISTORIES* CONSISTS, FIRST, OF A BRIEF, 39-word introductory sentence; then an account, which Herodotus attributes to knowledgeable Persians, tracing the origin of hostilities between inhabitants of Europe and Asia to a series of abductions of women in the mythical past (1.1–5); followed by Herodotus's own narrative of the career of Croesus of Lydia, beginning with the story of how Croesus's family came to rule the Lydians in the first place. A great deal of attention has been paid—justifiably—to Herodotus's opening sentence, which has been subjected to searching and productive analysis.¹ Similarly, scholars have recognized the significance of the stories of Croesus and his ancestor Gyges as helping to lay the foundation for the whole of the historian's ambitious project.² The stories of the

*I am pleased to record my gratitude to *TAPA*'s anonymous readers for their valuable advice and suggestions for improvement and, above all, to Craig Gibson and Matt Horrell for their exemplary editorial vigilance.

¹See Krischer 1965, Nagy 1987 and, most recently and most fully, Bakker 2002.

²Immerwahr 1956: 247–51 and 1966: 81–88; Stahl 1975; Erbse 1992: 3–30; Marincola 2001: 26 with nn29, 50. Note that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, when he refers to the beginning of Hdt.'s *Histories* (*Comp.* 4), cites the start of 1.6 (Κροῖσος ἦν Λυδοῦς μὲν γένος ...)

abductions, however, have posed a serious interpretative difficulty for critics, in part because of the tawdry character of the stories and in part because Herodotus introduces them only to say that he is going to concern himself with other matters. According to Herodotus, the Persians place the blame for causing the hostilities on the Phoenicians, who abducted Io, after which some Greeks carried off Europa from Phoenician Tyre; then Medea was abducted by Greek adventurers and, since no penalty was paid for that crime, Paris felt that he could abduct Helen from Greece with impunity. If Herodotus is not going to concern himself with these events, why does he place them so prominently at the start of his history? The disparity between these stock mythical accounts and the world-historical consequences that, according to the Persians, attended them—first the Trojan War and then the enduring enmity between East and West—has prompted some scholars to conclude that Herodotus has introduced these accounts for the purpose of ridiculing the kind of material that he considers beneath him. As long ago as 1913 no less an authority than Felix Jacoby protested against this attitude, asserting confidently that the then-trendy practice of finding humor in this account would surely pass out of fashion.³ In the century since then the fashion has shown no signs of growing old.

So, for example, Arnold Gomme says, “We begin with the humorous little preface about the mutual ravishments of women.”⁴ Donald Lateiner considers the account of intercontinental abductions to be “a parody of Hecataean mythological investigation,” with Herodotus “preferring to such silliness a man, a time, and an event more certain in *human* history.”⁵ Rosalind Thomas

as being familiar to nearly everyone; that is, he regards 1.1–5 as part of the proem (see Węcowski 2004: 147). Likewise, in the same context, he quotes Thuc. 1.24 (Ἐπιδαμνός ἐστι πόλις ...). For the structural similarities between Hdt. 1.1–5 and Thuc. 1.1–23, see Moles 1993: 92–114.

³ Jacoby 1913: 484: “die Mode, in diesen Kapiteln Witze H.s zu sehen ... , wird ja wohl vorübergehen.” Jacoby’s protest is directed in particular at the claims of Hauvette 1894: 187 (“C’est en badinant qu’Hérodote rappelle ces antiques démêlés, et le ton d’agréable raillerie qui domine tout le morceau ne laisse aucun doute sur les intentions véritables de l’historien”) and Bury 1909: 54 (“a speculation which set mythical tradition in a ridiculous light”).

⁴ Gomme 1954: 79.

⁵ Lateiner 1989: 38, with Lateiner’s emphasis. Lateiner elsewhere refers to the account’s “humorous intent” (34), “silly stories” (43), “tongue-in-cheek mythical *logos*” (131) and “folderol” (243n96), and he claims that 1.1–5 “illustrates what the *Histories* will *not* purvey” (41, with Lateiner’s emphasis). Węcowski 2004: 149–55 calls the passage a “*divertimento*.” But the very beginning of a serious, large-scale work is an odd place for a *divertimento*.

agrees that the opening sections of Book One represent a parody, either of Hecataeus or of other early writers of prose texts.⁶ And Carolyn Dewald characterizes the passage as “a quasi-humorous account” and “a tongue-in-cheek survey of a sequence of four mythic abductions.”⁷ Elsewhere, Dewald enlists the evidence of Aristophanes’ parody at *Acharnians* 523–29 in support of her claim that the “account contains elements of slapstick comedy.”⁸ All these scholars consider Herodotus to be using humor as a way of discrediting a manner of discourse that the historian is rejecting and hoping to supersede. Detecting humorous intent in ancient texts, however, is a notoriously fraught endeavor, especially when the critic is dependent upon the delicate interpretation of the author’s tone. In recent years, some scholars have come to recognize that these opening accounts contain serious themes that forecast concerns that will preoccupy Herodotus throughout his history. In what follows I should like to build upon and expand the investigation of those themes, leaving aside the question of whether it is legitimate to attribute to Herodotus a light-hearted attitude toward rape.

1. MOTIFS AND MOTIVATION IN HERODOTUS

After recounting what the Persians say, and noting the Phoenicians’ variant version of the story concerning Io (1.5.2), Herodotus moves on to his account of Croesus, saying merely, “This, then, is what the Persians and Phoenicians say, but I for my part am not going to say that these things happened in this or in some other way.”⁹ Frustratingly, Herodotus does not explain the reason for his reticence. A common understanding seems to be that the stories of the abductions belong to the realm of what we call “myth,” and Herodotus is concerned to distance himself from the mythical, being eager to plunge immediately into what is more readily verifiable, that is, into the domain of the

⁶ Thomas 2000: 268; see also Flory 1987: 25 (“Herodotus here parodies not just myth but rationalism itself”), Munson 2012: 198 (“a parody of super-secularized, super-rationalized mythology”).

⁷ In Waterfield and Dewald 1998: 595 and 596; see also Dewald 1999: 230 and 2012: 65 (“It is hard not to see Herodotus as amusing himself here”) and 66 (Hdt. “has also made the rationalized versions of the Persians and Phoenicians appear ridiculous”).

⁸ Dewald 2006: 146. See Olson 2002: liii–liv, 208–9 for the view, dismissed by Asheri 2007: 74, that Ar. is here parodying Hdt.; see also Lang 1972: 412: “almost certainly a parody of Herodotus’s parody.”

⁹ 1.5.3 ταῦτα μὲν νυν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοῖνικες λέγουσι. ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο. The text of Hdt. used is that of Hude’s 1927 OCT; all unidentified translations are my own.

genuinely historical.¹⁰ But, if so, it is surprising that Herodotus does not say so explicitly; he is not shy about giving his reasons for dismissing accounts elsewhere in his history. For example, he recounts but adds that he does not believe the story of the ten-year-old Cambyses (3.3.1), nor does he find credible the parentage the Scythians assign to Targitaos (4.5.1). The story of Scyllias swimming underwater from Aphetæ to Artemisium is only one of the many falsehoods told about him (8.8.3).¹¹ In any event, the very first story that Herodotus tells in his own voice, the account of Gyges and the wife of Candaules, is no more susceptible of historical verification than the Persians' narrative of Io's abduction; indeed, it has been observed that the two stories display significant elements in common.¹²

Nor does Herodotus entirely purge his history of accounts that derive from the period normally regarded as the era of myth.¹³ On the contrary, he uses myths connected with two of the very victims of these abductions as substantive evidence in support of his historical reasoning. At 4.45.4–5 Herodotus dismisses the idea that the continent Europe was named after the legendary Tyrian woman, on the grounds that she was Asian and never even set foot in Europe, having come only as close as the island of Crete. Herodotus must have been relying on his knowledge of these "facts" when he speculated that the unidentified Greeks who, according to the Persians, carried off Europa from her home in Phoenician Tyre must have been Cretans (1.2.1). Later in Book Four Herodotus seems confident that the abduction of Europa

¹⁰ Flory 1987: 24 ("unverifiable world of myth and fiction"); Bakker 2002: 17 and 28; Raaflaub 2002: 159 ("unverifiable"); Cobet 2002: 395; Asheri 2007: 9 ("Herodotus brushes off these accounts as mythical"), 30 and (on 1.5.3) 78; Boedeker 2011: 212 ("unverifiable"). Saïd even rewrites Hdt., quoting him as saying precisely what he omits (2012: 89, with emphasis added): "Herodotus leaves aside the introductory tales of the rapes and counter-rapes by saying: 'I'll not go on to say that this happened thus or another way, for these stories cannot be verified' (1.5.2)."

¹¹ Similar expressions of skepticism or outright disbelief are found at 1.75.6, 3.45.3, 6.124.2. For a convenient collection of the many places where Hdt. expresses his personal opinion, see Marincola 1989: 218–19.

¹² Dewald 1999: 228–30 ("a beautiful woman, sex and violence," 230), 2002: 270, 2012: 66. Both stories are concerned with males' improper treatment of women, in Candaules' case explicitly attributed to lust (1.8.1 ἡράσθη), and both portray a reciprocal response to the initial act. As we will see, reciprocity and lust are prominent themes in Hdt.'s history that the stories of abductions serve to introduce.

¹³ Boedeker 2002: 114–15 and Rood 2010: 65–67, pointing to certain passages where events from mythical times are represented by Hdt. as having effects that last into the historical period. See also the papers in Baragwanath and de Bakker, eds. 2012.

took place precisely eight generations before the settlement of Thera by the Lacedaemonian Theras, son of Autesion; for it was just eight generations before that event that Cadmus, while traveling in search of Europa, stopped at Thera and left some of his fellow Phoenicians on the island (4.147). In Book Two (113–19) Herodotus repeats the version of the abduction of Helen that he was told by the Egyptian priests. This version differs in significant ways from the account accepted by most Greeks; in particular, the priests allege that Helen was never at Troy, in obvious contradiction of some passages familiar from the Homeric epics. But the essence of the story, that Paris stole Helen away from her husband and that demands were made for her return, is common to both. More importantly, Herodotus explicitly¹⁴ and emphatically affirms his acceptance of the account given by the Egyptian priests (2.120.1 ἐγὼ δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τῷ περὶ Ἑλένης λεχθέντι καὶ αὐτὸς προστίθεμαι [“And I for my part personally subscribe to the account given about Helen”]). Further, Herodotus explains in detail his reasons for accepting the Egyptian version: If Helen had in reality been at Troy it is inconceivable that the Trojans would have fought a disastrous ten-year war rather than simply return her to her husband. This argument makes sense only if Herodotus and his presumed audience are convinced of the historical reality of the abduction of Helen by Paris and the consequent ten-year war, which is, after all, what Herodotus had quoted the Persians as claiming in 1.3.¹⁵

There are, however, two differences between the Egyptian version that Herodotus accepts in Book Two and the version attributed to the Persians in Book One. One relates to Paris’s motivation, concerning which the Egyptian priests are silent; the other involves an outright incompatibility between the

¹⁴ And implicitly, by shifting from indirect to direct discourse: de Jong 2012: 131–32; de Bakker 2012: 124–26.

¹⁵ Vandiver 2012: 151: “Herodotus shows not the faintest shadow of doubt that the Trojan War occurred and that Helen, Menelaus, Priam, Paris, and the rest were actual people whose actual deeds led to the war and its consequences.” Helen and Menelaus received recognition in cult at Athens, Sparta and elsewhere (Allan 2008: 14–16), so there could be no doubt of their having an existence in reality. Vandiver goes on (151–52) to make the excellent point that Hdt.’s emphatic expression of his own opinion (2.120.5 ὡς μὲν ἐγὼ γνώμην ἀποφαίνομαι ... ταῦτα μὲν τῇ ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ εἶρηται [“to express my own opinion ... this is presented in the way it appears to me”]), that the gods ensured the destruction of Troy as a punishment to illustrate the magnitude of Paris’s crime, contradicts the Persian assertion (1.4.2–3) that the Trojan War was a foolish overreaction to an insignificant incident. This suggests that the abductions in 1.1–5 may be intended by Hdt. to serve a legitimate historical purpose after all.

two accounts. For, while the Egyptians deny that Helen ever went to Troy, the Persians claim that the Trojans refused to return Helen to the Greeks, citing in justification the Greeks' refusal to return Medea; this presupposes a version in which the Trojans had the capability of returning Helen. Both differences, therefore, are connected: Paris was motivated, according to the Persians, to secure a wife from Greece by the knowledge that, if he did so, he would be under no obligation to render satisfaction (1.3.1 ἐπιστάμενον πάντως ὅτι οὐ δώσει δίκας), since he had heard that the Greeks had abducted Medea with impunity.¹⁶ The connection, then, between these two distinctive features of the Persian account is related to the question of motivation, or causation. We should recall that the entire narrative of the abductions is intended to express the Persians' understanding of the *cause* of the hostility between the inhabitants of Europe and Asia: The Persians say that, while the Phoenicians were the original cause of the hostility (1.1.1 Φοίνικας αἰτίους φασὶ γενέσθαι τῆς διαφορῆς), the Greeks were responsible for the second act of injustice (1.2.1 Ἑλλήνας αἰτίους τῆς δευτέρας ἀδικίης γενέσθαι). Herodotus had concluded his opening sentence by saying that his work was going to concern itself in particular with the cause of the conflict between Greeks and barbarians (τά τε ἄλλα καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι).

It is, therefore, possible, perhaps even likely, that, when Herodotus says that he is not going to come down on the side of one or another account of how these events occurred (1.5.3 ὥς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο), he is not expressing skepticism about the occurrence of the events, but is merely withholding judgment on the question of motivation. After all, how many Greeks would think of doubting the reality of the Trojan War or would deny that Paris abducted Helen from her home?¹⁷ Questions of motivation, however, even when they concern "mythical" characters, are a legitimate topic of speculation. Did Clytaemestra murder her husband in revenge for the sacrifice of Iphigenia or because of her adultery (Pind., *Pyth.* 11.22–25)? Was Agamemnon under compulsion to carry out that sacrifice or did he choose to do so (Aesch., *Ag.* 205–27)? Was it Andromache's drugs or Hermione's

¹⁶ Saïd 2012: 103.

¹⁷ Saïd 2012: 88 notes that Hdt. "never explicitly questions" the historicity of the stories of the Trojan Cycle, referring to 5.122, 7.20, 7.43 and 7.91; see also Vandiver quoted in n15. Herodotus even knows when the Trojan War took place: about 800 years before his own time (2.145.4). Thucydides also treats the Trojan War as a historical event, while recognizing that the principal source for the event, being a poet, is liable to exaggerate and embellish (1.10.3).

repellent personality that motivated Neoptolemus to reject the latter's bed (Eur., *Andr.* 32–33, 205–6)? And in the case of Herodotus himself it is not at all uncommon for the historian to leave open the motivation behind an act the historicity of which he has no reason to doubt.¹⁸ He is sure, for example, that Cyrus put Croesus on a pyre (1.86.3), whether for the purpose of consecrating him as a victory-offering to some god, or in fulfillment of a vow, or wishing to see if some higher power would rescue him. Amasis married the daughter of a prominent Cyrenaean (2.181–82), either because he was desirous of having a Greek wife or just for the sake of his friendship with the Cyrenaeans. Herodotus reports two different accounts of Oroetes' motivation in wanting to kill Polycrates (3.120–22), without expressing a preference for one version or the other. Similarly, there are differing stories to account for why the Spartans sent aid to the Samian rebels (3.47) and why the Athenians expelled the Pelasgians from Attica (6.137).

What, then, prompted Herodotus to begin with just these accounts, according so prominent a place to four narratives concerning abductions of women? He might have started his history with the invasion of Europe by the Mysians and Teucrians which, as Herodotus says, took place even earlier than the Trojan War and which he knows (on the basis of what evidence?) involved much smaller forces than those under Xerxes' command.¹⁹ Or the hostility between Europeans and Orientals might have been traced to the conflict between the Greeks and the Amazons, whose Asiatic origins near the River Thermodon are mentioned twice by Herodotus (4.110.1, 9.27.4). This conflict, also, predated the Trojan War, as it is associated with Heracles (Fowler 2013: 288–91). Indeed, Herodotus might have begun with the “first” Trojan War, for which the authority of Homer could be cited (*Il.* 5.638–42).

Instead, Herodotus takes as his point of departure the abductions of four women, two Greek and two Asiatic. A number of critics in recent years have sought to discern a serious motive behind Herodotus's choice of these stories, the latest of whom is Suzanne Saïd.²⁰ According to Saïd, the stories that Herodotus recounts here “introduce three major themes of the *Histories*,” namely *harpage* (in the sense not only of “abduction” but of “plunder”), women (“especially as objects of lust”) and the “transgression of natural

¹⁸ See the excellent and comprehensive discussion in Baragwanath 2008, esp. Ch. 4.

¹⁹ 7.20.2, a passage imitated, to similar effect, by Thucydides (see n17).

²⁰ Saïd 2012: 101–2, referring to Moles 1993: 96 and Cobet 1986: 4 (for whom, see further below).

boundaries.”²¹ Women figure conspicuously as objects of lust in this passage and, as Saïd points out, this theme is underlined by the immediately following story of Candaules’ wife (1.8.1), which is balanced by the account, to which we will return below, of Masistes’ womenfolk at the very end of the *Histories*.²² The story of Tomyris also is significantly placed, at the end of Book One and at the end of Cyrus’s life. But for all that Cyrus sues for her hand in marriage, it is not she but her kingdom that is the object of Cyrus’s lust, as both Tomyris and Herodotus’s readers are well aware (1.205). There may be, then, an intimate connection between the themes of women and of plunder. After all, the looting of property and the raping of women are, sadly, invariable accompaniments of military conquest (Gottschall 2008: 67–69, 75–80; Gaca 2014).

2. NO EXPLANATION NEEDED: TAKING SEXUAL AGGRESSION (AND RETALIATION) FOR GRANTED

A further theme that this passage introduces is that of the conflict between East and West but, as we have noted above, there were other mythical conflicts between Greeks and barbarians that Herodotus might have chosen. Yet another theme the Persians’ account illustrates is that of retribution, which can lead to an escalation resulting in consequences on a much larger scale than the original offense.²³ No one doubts that retaliation or, more generally, reciprocity is a significant theme in Herodotus’s *Histories*.²⁴ What is striking

²¹ For natural boundaries and their transgression as a major theme in Hdt., see Immerwahr 1966: 293–94; Lateiner 1989: 126–44; Romm 1998: 79–87.

²² For the significance of these two prominently placed accounts, see Wolff 1964, esp. 55–58; Dewald 1981: 107–9; Marincola 2001: 57; Blok 2002: 230–32; Flower and Marincola 2002: 291–92; Boedeker 2011: 230; for women in Hdt., see Hazewindus 2004. When Lateiner 1989: 141 says, “Disregard for that nearly universal rule of private property, the exclusive enjoyment of a wife by her husband, opens and closes the *Histories*,” the context makes clear that he is talking not about Paris’s abduction of Helen but about Candaules and his wife.

²³ This is well brought out in Aristophanes’ parody (above, n8) at *Ach.* 522–29 (in Sommerstein’s translation): “Now that [i.e., denunciation of smugglers], to be sure, was trivial and purely local; but then some cottabus-playing young rakes went to Megara and stole a whore called Simaetha. After that the Megarians, garlic-stung by the smart, stole two whores of Aspasia’s in retaliation. And from that broke forth the origin of the war upon all the Greeks: from three prostitutes.”

²⁴ For the pervasiveness of reciprocity in Hdt., see Gould 1989, Chs. 3 and 4; Braund 1998; Flower and Marincola 2002: 36–37; Marincola 2001: 48–49, with further bibliography at n125.

about the way in which Herodotus introduces this theme here at the very beginning of his narrative is how intrusive the notion of retaliation is in the account. It has to be attributed to the Persians, since no Greek would think of regarding Jason's abduction of Medea as motivated by a desire to retaliate for the abduction of Io, or Paris's abduction of Helen as retaliation for the abduction of Medea.²⁵ Still, Herodotus goes out of his way to underline the reciprocal nature of these acts by noting that the Persians considered the abduction of Io to be balanced out by that of Europa (1.2.1).

It is surely relevant that retaliation, escalation of conflict and the seizure of foreign women are found at the very beginning of another large-scale narrative concerning, as it happens, a war between Greeks and Asiatics. I refer, of course, to the *Iliad*. Scholars readily acknowledge the way in which the opening of Herodotus's history recalls that of Homer's epic, with its concern over the question of the origin of the conflict.²⁶ But the conviction that Herodotus seeks to distance himself from the account of reciprocal abductions seems to have inhibited scholars from recognizing that this account, too, significantly recalls the initial action of the *Iliad*.²⁷ Before the time at which the poem begins, the Greek Agamemnon had forcibly taken as his concubine the daughter of Chryses the priest of Apollo, from the Asiatic town of Chryse. When Chryses demands the return of his daughter, offering splendid compensation, Agamemnon refuses, just as the Greeks, according to Herodotus's Persians (1.2.3), refused the request of Medea's Asiatic father to return the abducted princess. This refusal flies in the face of the sentiment of Agamemnon's troops (1.22) and angers Apollo, who sends a plague upon the Greek army. Eventually Agamemnon is prevailed upon to return Chryses' daughter, not only without receiving compensation but instead (1.99–100) paying a price for the injustice done to Apollo and his priest. Rather, however, than seeing this as restoring the balance that his initial action had disrupted, Agamemnon becomes, as Herodotus might put it, responsible for the second act of injustice, demanding that he be given a prize comparable (1.136 ἀντάξιον) to that which he was required to forgo.

²⁵ Flory 1987: 25–26; Rood 2010: 56–57.

²⁶ Nagy 1987: 184: "The expression δι' ἣν αἰτίην ... in the prooemium of Herodotus ... is functionally analogous to the question posed in the prooemium of the *Iliad*: that is, *why* did Achilles and Agamemnon come into conflict with each other (*Iliad* 17–12)?" See Krischer 1965: 160–61; Gould 1989: 64; Boedeker 2002: 106.

²⁷ Scholars have repeatedly pointed to the use of the word ἀκλεᾶ in Hdt.'s opening sentence as an indication that his work courts comparison with Homer's epic: Nagy 1987; Thomas 2000: 267; Boedeker 2002: 99; Griffiths 2006: 135; Asheri 2007: 73; Chiasson 2012: 118–19; Blondell 2013: 143.

And so, in retaliation for Achilles' angry remonstrance, Agamemnon confiscates Briseis, whom Achilles had earlier taken as his concubine when he plundered the Asiatic city of Lyrnessus (2.688–93). At this point Athena has to intervene to prevent the anger of the two men from escalating to the level of manslaughter. Still, Achilles' withdrawal from the fighting because of his anger at being slighted in this fashion results in many deaths.

Of course, the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon does not lead to the outbreak of a war involving whole nations, much less a lasting antagonism between the inhabitants of two continents.²⁸ But the analogy does not need to be exact in every detail for the allusion to make its point. And the point is clearly further to associate Herodotus's work with the greatest of all literary works, and one which, like the *Histories*, is related to a memorable war between Europeans and Asiatics. At the same time, Herodotus's account of intercontinental abductions introduces themes that will be of concern to him throughout his narrative, including the question of retaliation as a motivation for human action and the issue of human motivation in general. This was recognized and briefly discussed by John Moles and Justus Cobet. According to Moles 1993: 96, "the section has serious undertones; it suggests a concern with causation, with recurrent patterns in events, especially the reciprocal pattern of crime and counter-crime and punishment." Likewise, Cobet sees this passage as an assertion on the part of Herodotus of one of the historian's primary concerns (1986: 4–5):

Though he evidently does not regard this brief version of reciprocal conflict between Greek and barbarian as a substantial contribution to explanation of the αἰτία of the particular war in question, we shall surely not be wrong if we conclude that this discussion represents in principle for Herodotus an acceptable approach to discourse about causation in war. That is to say, if one asks for the αἰτία of a war, one accepts as part at least of the answer—and an important part—the identification of an individual or a group as bearing responsibility.

But more can be said about the way in which Herodotus's account establishes these themes as fundamental to the narrative that is to follow, nor

²⁸ Still, the deipnosophist Leonides (Ath. 560B–F) includes the seizures of Briseis and Chryseis, along with the abduction of Helen, in a long list illustrating the proposition that "the greatest wars have come about on account of women." Interestingly, another of the wars that Leonides refers to is Cambyses' invasion of Egypt, and he recounts the story found in Hdt. 3.1 (although Leonides attributes it to Ctesias) about Amasis sending the daughter of Apries, rather than his own daughter, to be Cambyses' wife. In Hdt., this is the cause that the *Persians* give for Cambyses' decision to invade, and Baragwanath 2008: 110 is right to note that "[t]he emphasis on causation (δι' αἰτίην τοιγύνηδε, 3.1.1) recalls the opening chapters of the *Histories*."

would I restrict myself, as Cobet does, solely to causation as it relates to war. To be credible, any explanation of human behavior must be couched in terms intelligible to the audience at which it is directed; that is, it must make sense as an explanation and must not require any further explanation. In other words, the explanation must cohere as a *story*, an English word that owes its existence to Herodotus's choice of the word ἱστορίη in his opening sentence.²⁹ While different sorts of explanations may be appropriate to a work of history and an epic poem, they must both appeal to the audience as intelligible human responses to the given circumstances. The extreme intensity of Achilles' response to Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis may be rooted in the specific character of Peleus's son, but his anger at being so treated is a response to which anyone can relate. Everyone reacts to being treated unfairly by wishing for some sort of redress, either in the form of restitution or revenge or both. This is why no one finds the opening of the *Iliad* implausible. The reason critics find the opening of Herodotus's *Histories* implausible is that, while a quarrel over captured women may be acceptable in the context of a fictionalized environment projected back into the Bronze Age, it is felt to have no place in a serious work of historical research. But Herodotus seems to have been counting on the very seriousness with which everyone takes the opening of the *Iliad* to lend credibility to the opening of his epic in prose. Just as it is not really the women about whom Achilles and Agamemnon are quarreling, but about their status relative to one another, so it is not vital to Herodotus's purpose whether the events in 1.1–5 "happened in this or in some other way." Rather, the stories of reciprocal abductions present a coherent narrative pattern, involving accounts sanctioned by the authority of longstanding tradition, of men—and all the actors in the Persian account are men—carrying off desirable women, either unprovoked or in response to an earlier, similar act.

In connection with his discussion of Herodotus and "reciprocal action," but not specifically in relation to the Persian account of abductions, John Gould cites an illuminating passage from Edward Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*:³⁰

A Nuer dispute is usually a balance of wrongs, for a man does not, except in sexual matters, wantonly commit an act of aggression. He does not steal a man's cow, club him, or withhold his bride-cattle in divorce, unless he has some score to settle. Consequently it is very rare for a man to deny the damage he has caused. He seeks to justify it.

²⁹ It is not only writers of fiction who compose "stories"; journalists, who aspire to truthfulness and objectivity, produce "news stories," the credibility of which owes as much (or more) to the journalist's adherence to narrative coherence as to accuracy in reporting.

³⁰ Gould 1989: 83, citing Evans-Pritchard 1940: 171–72.

What is remarkable about this quotation, and about Gould's use of it, is the casual way in which the phrase, "except in sexual matters," is treated. Neither Gould nor, in his extensive treatment of Nuer social relations, Evans-Pritchard considers the exception of sexual matters as requiring further explanation. That is, like the Nuer themselves, Gould and Evans-Pritchard seem to think that, when it comes to sexual matters, an act of aggression requires no special justification. It is, apparently, so basic a fact of life that it does not even need to be discussed. By contrast, when it comes to the general notion of reciprocity Gould feels it necessary to spend some pages making it explicit that, for Herodotus and his audience, reciprocity provides a motivation for behavior that does not "require further explanation"; rather, considerations of reciprocal obligation "form one of the most powerful strands of connection which structure Herodotus' narrative, but it remains barely visible since it is something which he and his readers take for granted" (1989: 43).

I am convinced that Herodotus and his fellow fifth-century Greeks would also take for granted the pervasiveness of (male) sexual aggression and would adopt the attitude that it is simply something that does not require further explanation. And it is this attitude, I believe, that prompts Herodotus to begin his enquiry into the origins of the hostility between East and West with what appears to be a series of routine acts of sexual aggression, attended by a series of acts of retaliation. That is, there is no need to ask for further explanation of what caused the behavior of the Phoenicians who abducted Io or of the Cretans who retaliated by abducting Europa. Not all conflicts, of course, have their origin in an act of sexual aggression that calls for reciprocal action, but the pattern established here—an act of aggression that seemingly requires neither explanation nor justification, followed by a similarly comprehensible act of retaliation—serves as a model for what is to follow throughout Herodotus's narrative. And what follows immediately upon the account of the abductions of women is the notice that the Lydian Croesus was the first barbarian known to have imposed payment of tribute on Greeks (1.6.2) and, next, the story of how rule over the Lydians passed to Croesus's family, a story that has as its motivation the fact that "Candaules was in thrall sexually to his own wife" (1.8.1 Κανδαύλης ἡράσθη τῆς ἐωυτοῦ γυναικός). When Herodotus returns, in 1.26, to the account of Croesus's aggression against the Greek cities, he notes that Croesus justified his attacks by bringing various charges (αἰτίαι), including even trivial ones, but he clearly does not feel that he has to explain why Croesus wished to acquire additional territory, any more than he had to explain why Io was abducted.³¹

³¹ Immerwahr 1956: 257–58.

3. WHY SHOULD I MENTION IO?

Scholars have not been inclined to see a connection between sexual aggression and acquisitiveness more generally. A notable exception is Deborah Boedeker, to whose important 2011 article the present study is greatly indebted.³² But she too passes quickly over the initial accounts of abductions (212) without fully appreciating the extent to which the connection between sexual aggression and acquisitiveness more generally is encoded in the opening account of the abduction of Io. This is the act which, according to Herodotus's Persian informants, was initially responsible for the conflict between Greeks and barbarians. The abduction of Io cannot, like the other incidents in the sequence of abductions, be accounted for as an act of retaliation, since it begins the sequence. What, then, motivated the Phoenicians to carry off the daughter of the king of Argos? The fact that this act set off a chain reaction that included the abductions of Medea and Helen, the sexual motivation of which is in both instances manifest, seems to have created an assumption that the abduction of Io, and that of Europa as well, can be understood as nothing more than an act of sexual aggression, an act whose motivation requires no further investigation.

There are reasons to believe that Herodotus did not intend the story of Io's abduction to be understood simply as an account of a man carrying off a woman for purposes of sexual gratification. The Persians do not identify an individual aggressor, or rather aggressors, for Io is carried off along with other Argive women (1.1.4) by the crew of the Phoenician ship.³³ Nor is Io carried off to Phoenicia, the presumable home of her abductor(s), but to Egypt.³⁴ The significance of this is that it leaves open the possibility, perhaps

³² Boedeker is primarily concerned with the way Hdt. presents male–female relations as affecting Persian history, but she recognizes that “at the broadest level, these patterns function less as markers of what is uniquely Persian than as an engine for historical, especially imperial, movement” (212); compare her conclusion (232), “Elite gender interactions become in the ‘Histories’ both an emblem of and an important mechanism for historical contingency.”

³³ The Phoenicians, for their part, in disputing the Persian account claim that it was the captain of the ship (1.5.2) with whom Io, presumably willingly, had sexual relations and became pregnant, but they agree with the Persians (and, of course, the Greeks) that Io ended up, not in Phoenicia but in Egypt (ἐς Αἴγυπτον, 1.2.1 and 1.5.2).

³⁴ As Rood 2010: 49 observes, Hdt. “does not offer any detail about her route from Europe to Asia after she has been seized by the Phoenicians; at most, he implies that she was taken straight from Argos to Egypt.” In fact, there is no suggestion in the Persians' account that Io went to Asia at all, nor is there any mythical connection between the wanderings of Io and Phoenicia; in PV 807–14 she even reaches the Delta from the south, apparently without having set hoof in the Levant.

even the likelihood, that the abduction of Io is here presented not as an act of sexual aggression but as a commercial undertaking.³⁵ This is, after all, what the Phoenicians are famous for and it would follow a pattern familiar to Herodotus's audience from the presentation of the Phoenicians in Homer.³⁶ In the story Odysseus fabricates for Eumaeus (*Odyssey* 14.192–359) the hero represents himself as a Cretan who acquired great wealth in Egypt and who was deceived by a Phoenician, who persuaded him to accompany him to Libya, allegedly on a commercial venture but in fact intending to sell Odysseus for profit. In turn, Eumaeus tells Odysseus his own story of how he ended up on Ithaca (15.390–484), a story that also involves human trafficking on the part of the Phoenicians: Eumaeus was a king's son, living on an island called Syria; his nurse was a Phoenician woman who agreed to kidnap Eumaeus and hand him over, along with some stolen property, to the crew of a Phoenician ship to be sold in foreign parts.³⁷ In Herodotus as well this is the role the Phoenicians play: According to the priests of Egyptian Thebes two Egyptian priestesses were once carried off by Phoenicians, one of whom was sold (2.54.1 *πρῆθεισαν*) in Libya and one in Greece.³⁸

Herodotus emphasizes the commercial interests of the Phoenicians from the very start of his narrative, telling us that, as soon as they settled in their present territory on the coast of the Mediterranean, they began to undertake long-distance voyages by sea, transporting Egyptian and Assyrian merchandise (1.1.1 *φορτία Αἰγύπτια τε καὶ Ἀσσύρια*). Indeed, that is the reason for

³⁵ Dewald 2012: 65 notes that *Helen* “has become a commercialized counter in the wife-swapping that is the dominant theme of the story”; her fate is conspicuously connected in Book Two with that of the other property that Paris purloined from his host's palace (2.114.2, 115.1, 115.5–6, 118.3, 119.1). But the commodification of women had already begun with the account of Io.

³⁶ Flory 1987: 26–28; Dougherty 2001: 111–17; for the Phoenicians in Homer, see Aubet 1993: 102–8; Lane Fox 2009: 320–29. Human trafficking between Greeks and Phoenicians is attested in the Bible; see Ezekiel 27.13 and, from a later time, Joel 4.6.

³⁷ The Phoenician woman slept with a member of the crew, perhaps providing the inspiration for the Phoenician version of the abduction of Io in Hdt. (see n33). This is the only element of an explicitly sexual nature in these stories of Phoenician trafficking, and it is introduced by the Phoenicians solely for the purpose of denying culpability.

³⁸ Hdt. seems to regard this Egyptian account as historically accurate, as he uses it in a rationalizing argument to explain the Greek story of the oracular black dove at Dodona (Munson 2005: 67–69). In Euripides' *Helen*, produced in 412, the chorus consists of Greek women held as slaves, transported to Egypt by “barbarian oar” (191); later in the play, when the Egyptian king supplies a ship for Helen's mock funeral for Menelaus, it is a Phoenician ship (1272, 1451), suggesting the likely means by which the chorus are imagined to have reached their African destination.

their presence at Argos, where they have been offering their wares for sale (1.1.2 διατίθεσθαι τὸν φόρτον) when Io and some other Argive women come down to the shore, attracted by the opportunity to purchase those imported goods that especially appeal to them (1.1.4 ὠνέεσθαι τῶν φορτίων τῶν σφι ἦν θυμὸς μάλιστα). After four or five days, Herodotus tells us, nearly all the Phoenicians' merchandise had been disposed of, using a verb (1.1.3 ἐξεμπολημένων) that he uses nowhere else, a compound of a Homeric *hapax* found in Eumaeus's life story to refer precisely to the commercial activity of the Phoenicians.³⁹ By the point in the narrative when the Phoenician merchants attack Io and the other Argive women, capturing some and stowing them aboard their ship, there has been nothing to lead us to believe that the Argive women are seen as sexual objects rather than as commodities to be transported for sale in Egypt.

It is only in retrospect, after Herodotus has continued the Persians' account with the stories of Medea and Helen, and after the Phoenicians have registered their objection to the Persian version, claiming that Io went willingly to Egypt because of her shame at becoming pregnant, that a sexual interpretation of the story of Io's abduction becomes a prominent possibility. But even in retrospect, and even within the terms of the Persian account, there is, or there ought to be, uncertainty over the intentions attributed to the Phoenician merchants. According to the Persians (1.4.2), "It is clear that women would not be abducted unless they were themselves willing," expressing a sentiment that is depressingly familiar from narratives of sexual violence in our own day. And yet, as the Persians themselves portray the abduction of Io and the other Argive women, the victims had no opportunity to express their willingness; they were out shopping one day and they were overpowered by a number of foreign men who threw them into their ship and carried them off to Egypt.⁴⁰ There is, then, a tension in the very first account that Herodotus presents, a tension that is not in fact resolved: Were Io and the other Argive women, like Medea, say, or Helen, complicit in sexual advances directed at them, or were they helpless victims of the lucrative Mediterranean slave trade? This tension, and Herodotus's refusal to

³⁹ *Od.* 15.456. According to Hoekstra ad loc. (Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989: 260), Hdt.'s "information about Io's abduction by Phoenicians is likely to be an offshoot of our passage or a similar tale."

⁴⁰ 1.1.4 ἐσβαλομένων; see 6.95.2 (horses), Thuc. 8.31.4 (supplies), and contrast Herodotus's use of ἐσβιβάζω, when the object of the verb is more compliant: 1.60.4 (Phye), 6.95.2 (troops), 7.60.3 (troops). As Scott 2005: 341 notes on 6.95.2, "Herodotus stresses that you have to put horses on board (ἐξεβάλλοντο at §101.1 when they are finally disembarked), but men get on by themselves."

resolve it, is likely to have been deliberate. Further, Aristophanes' parody in *Acharnians* (above, n23) plays upon the ambiguity inherent in the passage, by making the victims of the abductions that precipitate the Peloponnesian War prostitutes and by locating those abductions in the commercial context of the Megarian Decree; for prostitutes are both objects of sexual desire and items of value on the open market.

There is, then, no inherent incompatibility between the Argive women as commodities and as objects of sexual attention. And that is why this narrative account serves as the ideal introduction, both to the stories of reciprocal abductions of women and to Herodotus's history of the conflicts between nations. In common with the Nuer, the ancient Greeks considered male sexual aggression a phenomenon that requires no special explanation. But to the Greeks the sexual desire that leads to such aggression, what we would call "lust" and the Greeks refer to as *eros*, is a specialized form of the desire to possess and control, a desire that manifests itself in the widespread practice of trying to secure, by any means, material goods, territory and political power. By opening his history with an account that deliberately leaves ambiguous the object of the Phoenicians' lust—are the Argive women desired for reasons related to their sexual attractiveness or as material possessions or both?—Herodotus signals that the specific objects of men's lust will be of less interest in the narratives to follow than the dynamics of that lust. Even Paris, Aphrodite's pet and the virtual embodiment of male erotic desire, did not content himself merely with carrying off the most beautiful woman in the world; in the process of abducting Menelaus's wife he also made off with a considerable amount of his host's property.⁴¹ The easy connection that the Greeks made between erotic desire and other forms of acquisitiveness and consequent aggression is what makes these stories of abductions a more suitable point of departure than the Mysian and Teucrian invasion of Europe or the "first" Trojan War, subjects that were available to Herodotus (above, p. 7) but that he could not represent as involving *eros* in its most basic form of sexual desire.⁴² Nor could Herodotus start with the war be-

⁴¹ 2.114.2 αὐτὴν τε ταύτην ἄγων ἥκει καὶ πολλὰ κάρτα χρήματα ("he has come bringing that very woman and a great deal of property as well"); see also Hom. *Il.* 3.282, 7.363, 13.626, 22.114, *Cypria* p. 103.9 Allen and n35 above.

⁴² Pelliccia 1992: 79 argues that "Herodotus' preface, and his histories as a whole, reverse the preference expressed by Sappho for the erotic over the military," referring to the priamel in fr. 16 Voigt, in which Sappho concludes that what is κάλλιστον ["paramount"] is κῆν' ὅττω τις ἔραται ["that which one desires"]. Pelliccia emphasizes that "what Herodotus does ... is demote, not expel, *eros* as a force in world events." I prefer to see Hdt. as acknowledging the correlation between the erotic and the military (as even Sappho appears to do by using the neuter form κῆνο).

tween Greeks and Amazons; for, while there is a sexual component to the story of the Amazons as Herodotus tells it (4.111–14), the sexual relations are consensual. Moreover, contrary to the “natural” order of things, it is the women who are the aggressors (4.110.1 and 2; 9.27.4).

4. EROS AND ACQUISITIVENESS

It will be necessary, then, to substantiate the claim made in the previous paragraph, that the Greeks perceived a connection between *eros* in the form of sexual desire and other types of acquisitiveness, particularly those that comprise the major subject of Herodotus’s historical inquiry, namely lust for political power and the drive for territorial expansion.⁴³ In Herodotus, the words ἐρῶ, ἔρω and ἐραστής are used in only two senses, one referring to sexual desire and one in reference to lusting after tyrannical power.⁴⁴ For example, Periander, who knows what he is talking about, sends his daughter to deliver a message to her brother in which Periander pleads with his son to return from exile and take up the tyranny, saying, “Tyranny is a precarious thing; many are those who lust after it.”⁴⁵ Among those who lust after tyranny are Deioces the Mede and the Spartan general Pausanias.⁴⁶ Nor is it surprising that absolute power, in the form of tyranny, should be the object of such intense feelings. As we learn from an anecdote elsewhere in Herodotus, tyranny is apparently regarded as the most desirable thing of all: In Book Five, Darius wishes to reward Histiaeus of Miletus and Coes of Mytilene for their help and advice in connection with his crossing of the Danube to attack the Scythians. When he offers them their choice of rewards (5.11), the latter asks

⁴³ According to Immerwahr 1956: 255, “the theme of Asiatic expansionism ... is the main theme of the work.” Harrison 2003: 146–49 identifies “desire for tyranny,” “desire for imperial expansion” and “*eros*” as three (of six) separate categories in a “provisional ... (and doubtless partial) taxonomy of motivation” in Hdt. Elsewhere Harrison notes, “There is a frequent association of sexual lust with the lust for tyranny or empire” (1997: 196).

⁴⁴ Benardete 1969: 137–38; Nagy 1990: 289–90; Boedeker 2011: 230–32; Blondell 2013: 149. For the sexual meaning, see 1.8.1 *bis* (Candaules and his wife), 2.131.1 (Mycerinus and his daughter), 3.31.2 and 6 (Cambyes and his sister), 6.62.1 (Ariston and Agetus’s wife; for ἐκνίξε ... ἔρω [“lust ... clawed away (at him)”], see Eur. *Med.* 555, 568), 9.108.1 (Xerxes and Masistes’ wife), 9.108.2 (Xerxes and Darius’s wife), 9.113.2 (Xerxes). In Homer and the Homeric Hymns, in addition to its sexual application, ἔραμαι can refer to lust for battle or craving for food (Weiss 1998: 38).

⁴⁵ 3.53.4 τυραννὶς χρήμα σφαλερόν, πολλοὶ δὲ αὐτῆς ἐρασταὶ εἰσι.

⁴⁶ 1.96.2 ἐρασθεὶς τυραννίδος (“[Deioces], lusting after tyranny”), 5.32 ἔρωτα σχῶν τῆς Ἑλλάδος τύραννος γενέσθαι (“[Pausanias], overcome with a passionate desire to become tyrant of Greece”); see Boedeker 2011: 232, citing these two occurrences: “At metaphorical and narrative levels alike, the drive for power is parallel to the drive to possess or control a woman.”

to be made tyrant of Mytilene while the former, who is already tyrant of his city, requests additional territory in which to establish a polis. On another occasion, Darius offers Syloson, the brother of the Samian tyrant Polycrates, limitless gold and silver (3.140.4 χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον ἄπλετον) to reward him for his earlier gift to Darius of a beautiful cloak; Syloson declines the gold and silver in preference for political power over Samos, from which he has been exiled. Syloson undoubtedly recognized that political power carries with it the opportunity for self-enrichment.

It seems, then, that what is most desirable and, therefore, what is appropriately spoken of as the object of *eros*, is tyranny; just below tyranny on the scale of desirability are wealth and, if one is already a tyrant, further expansion of one's power. That these are regarded as the supreme objects of desire is amply illustrated by other texts contemporary with Herodotus.⁴⁷ In Gorgias's *Defense of Palamedes* the mythical hero, charged with conspiring to commit treason, asks what could possibly induce him to entertain such risky behavior. Given this speech's preoccupation with the argument from probability,⁴⁸ the likelihood is exceptionally high that Gorgias has gone out of his way to present the motives that his audience would regard as most plausible. The first motive Palamedes suggests, only to dismiss it as a possibility, is the hope of becoming tyrant (82B11a.13 DK τυραννεῖν). The second possibility, also dismissed, is that Palamedes might have been "overcome with lust for wealth and possessions" (15 πλούτου καὶ χρημάτων ἐρασθεῖς).

This assumption, that tyranny and the acquisition of wealth or territory are the things most to be desired, is familiar from the traditional narrative of the Judgment of Paris, where they appear in competition with sexual attractiveness. While Homer is reticent regarding the details of the Judgment, evidence suggests that, according to tradition, the three goddesses, not content to be judged objectively on the basis of their good looks, bribed Paris to secure his verdict in the beauty pageant. The wording of Proclus's summary of the *Cypria*, according to which Paris voted for Aphrodite because he was "aroused by hopes of marriage to Helen" (p. 102.18 Allen ἐπαρθεῖς τοῖς Ἑλένης

⁴⁷ In Soph. *OT*, when Creon is accused by Oedipus of treasonously conspiring to overthrow him, he defends himself in "a masterpiece of the new sophistic rhetoric" (Knox 1957: 88), protesting in a way that suggests that he is somehow unusual in not desiring to be a tyrant: 587–88 οὐτ' αὐτὸς ἱμείρων ἔφυν/ τύραννος εἶναι ("neither am I myself naturally disposed to desire to be a tyrant"); compare his summing up at 601 (οὐτ' ἐραστής τῆσδε τῆς γνώμης ἔφυν ["neither am I by nature a passionate lover of that way of thinking"], the only occurrence of ἐραστής in Soph. apart from the title of the satyr-play *Achilleos Erastai*) and see Ludwig 2002: 149.

⁴⁸ Gagarin 1994: 54–55.

γάμοις), indicates that Helen was the inducement offered by Aphrodite. It is unimaginable that Hera and Athena would not have attempted to outbid their rival and, being goddesses they have the capacity to proffer bribes comparable to, and even exceeding, what the Great King has to offer.⁴⁹ And, being goddesses, they can be presumed to know just what it is that a young man most desires. We learn what that is from two contemporaries of Herodotus, namely Euripides and Cratinus: Hera, as the wife of the overlord of the gods, promises to grant tyranny over Asia and Europe to Paris should he judge in her favor⁵⁰; in keeping with her martial character, Athena's gift to Paris is the opportunity to conquer Greece at the head of a Trojan army.⁵¹ The bribe offered by Aphrodite, the most attractive object of sexual desire available to a mortal,⁵² puts sexual desire on a level with lust for tyranny and military conquest. As it happens, Paris chooses to award the prize to the goddess who counts Eros as a member of her personal entourage. But, as we know, Paris made a disastrous mistake.⁵³ If he had been thinking rationally, Paris would have understood that the bribes offered by the two other goddesses entail access to the most attractive object of sexual desire available to a mortal.

⁴⁹ For the Greek view of Xerxes as comparable to Zeus, see Hdt. 7.56.2, 220.4; Gorgias 82B5a DK; Griffith 2011.

⁵⁰ Eur. *Tro.* 927–28 “Ἡρα δ’ ὑπέσχετ’ Ἀσιάδ’ Εὐρώπης θ’ ὅρουσ/ τυραννίδ’ ἕξειν, εἴ σφε κρίνειεν Πάρις (“Hera promised him Asia and the lands of Europe, for him to rule over as tyrant, if Paris should judge in her favor”). That this detail is traditional, and not a Euripidean invention, is clear from the hypothesis to Cratinus’s *Dionysalexandros* (*P.Oxy.* 663.14–15 παρὰ μὲν) “Ἡρα[ς] τυραννίδο(ς) ἀκινήτου [“from Hera permanent tyranny”]). Since that play mocked Pericles, it must have been produced at least fifteen years before *Troades*, staged in 415; Storey 2005: 214–15 suggests a date of 437. Euripides also refers to the bribes that the goddesses offered Paris in his earlier *Andromache* (287–89 ἔβαν δὲ Πριαμίδαν ὑπερ-/βολαῖς λόγων δυσφρόνων/ παραβαλλόμεναι [“they approached the son of Priam, competing in the extravagance of their malevolent offers”]), with Stinton 1965: 18–19), of the late (?) 420s.

⁵¹ *Tro.* 925–26 καὶ Παλλάδος μὲν ἦν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δόσις/ Φρυγί στρατηγοῦνθ’ Ἑλλάδ’ ἐξανιστάναι (“and Pallas’s offer to Alexander was for him to lead the Phrygians in laying waste to Greece”); *Dionysalex.* arg. 15–16 πα[ρ]ὰ δ’ Ἀθηνᾶς εὐτυχί(α)ς κ(α)τ(ὰ) πόλεμο(ν) (“and from Athena success in war”).

⁵² *Tro.* 929–30 (Helen is speaking) Κύπρις δὲ τοῦμόν εἶδος ἐκπαλουμένη/ δώσειν ὑπέσχετ’ (“and Cypris, admiring my outstanding beauty, offered it to him”); *Dionysalex.* arg. 16–19 τῆς δ’ Ἀφροδί(της) κάλλιστό(ν) τε κ(αὶ) ἐπέραστον αὐτὸν ὑπάρχειν (“Aphrodite’s [offer was that] he should have that which is loveliest and most desirable”).

⁵³ In connection with Paris’s award of the prize to Aphrodite Homer refers to his *ate* (*Il.* 24.28–30). For a defense of ἄτης against the variant ἀρχῆς, see Stinton 1965: 72.

For it is the prerogative of the tyrant and the military conqueror to have his way with any woman he pleases.⁵⁴ As we have seen, the *Iliad* opens with a quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon over women who have been taken by the spear: Chryseis, whom the army selected as a prize for their commander (1.369) and whom Agamemnon prefers even to his own wife (1.113–15), and Briseis, whom Achilles took after killing her husband and brothers (19.291–99). This aspect of warfare is made brutally clear when Nestor urges on the Achaean troops, encouraging them not to contemplate returning home before each of them has taken the wife of a Trojan to his bed (2.354–55). And, at the end of the war, as we learn from Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, the commander of the Greek troops at Troy will return home leading the most beautiful of Priam's daughters (13.365–66) as his concubine. Satisfying his lust by forcing himself on any object of his choosing is part of the standard picture of the tyrant as well as of the conqueror in war.⁵⁵ In the debate on constitutions in Herodotus⁵⁶ Otanes expresses himself as opposed, nominally, to “monarchy,” but he slips up at one point and makes it clear that monarchy is in fact synonymous with tyranny.⁵⁷ His most serious objection to “monarchy” is the fact that the man who occupies such a position subverts ancestral law, violates women and kills men without a trial (3.80.5). It is, therefore, not surprising that tyranny and military conquest should be spoken of in terms associated with sexual desire.

⁵⁴ From the perspective of evolutionary biology, the very *reason* human (and other mammalian) males pursue social influence or military conquest is in hopes of increased sexual access to females: “Males ... compete for food, territory or, if they are social animals, they will compete for rank. But these competitions are often proxy fights for reproductive opportunities: males fight for females or they fight for the territories, social dominance, or other resources required to attract and retain them” (Gottschall 2008: 46–47; see in general Ch. 3, “Why Do Men Fight? The Evolutionary Biology and Anthropology of Male Violence”).

⁵⁵ Holt 1998, with references to ancient texts and modern commentary.

⁵⁶ 3.80–82; for the debate, see Pelling 2002.

⁵⁷ 3.80.4 καίτοι ἄνδρα γε τύραννον ἄφθονον ἔδει εἶναι, ἔχοντά γε πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ (“and yet a man who is a tyrant ought to be free from envy, since he has all the advantages”). One is inevitably reminded of the τυραννικός ἀνὴρ in Pl. *Resp.*, who gives in to all “the pleasures and desires that are inborn in all of us” (571b ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ... αἱ κινδυνεύουσι μὲν ἐγγίγνεσθαι παντί; see also 572b δεινόν τι καὶ ἄγριον καὶ ἄνομον ἐπιθυμιῶν εἶδος ἐκάστω ἔνεστι [“there is in each person a certain kind of desire that is dangerous, uncontrollable and lawless”]). The reason he cannot control himself is that evil-minded associates have implanted in him “a kind of lust” (572e ἔρωτά τινα; see also 574d–e) that dominates him.

In fact, the earliest surviving occurrence of the word τυραννίς represents it explicitly as an object of *eros*.⁵⁸ Granted, Charon the carpenter in Archilochus's iambic fragment claims that he does *not* lust after tyranny but, like Creon's defense in Sophocles (above, n47), this provides persuasive evidence that it is felt necessary to proclaim loudly one's disinclination to rule over one's fellow citizens precisely because everyone is ordinarily suspected of harboring such desires.⁵⁹ In democratic Athens accusations of conspiring to overthrow the democracy could be couched in terms of aiming at tyranny, spoken of in terms of sexual desire, and deployed indiscriminately against political enemies.⁶⁰ In Aristophanes' *Wasps* the chorus, having accused Bdelycleon of attempting to introduce τυραννίς (464), condemn him to his face as a "lover of monarchy" (474 μοναρχίας ἐραστά), equating monarchy and tyranny in the same way we have seen Otanes do in Herodotus, and speaking of them in terms appropriate to an object of erotic desire.⁶¹ One who was often accused of aiming at tyranny was Alcibiades.⁶² For obvious reasons Plato, or whoever it was who wrote the dialogue *Alcibiades*, would not want to characterize the title character as lusting after tyranny, but, while the actual

⁵⁸ Archil. fr. 19.3 West μεγάλης δ' οὐκ ἐρέω τυραννίδος ("I do not lust after grand tyrannical power").

⁵⁹ The lengths that Socrates goes to in Pl. *Grg.* arguing against Callicles, who claims that it is "natural" for the strong to rule over and to possess more than the weak (483c–84a), shows that Callicles' view is both dangerous and widespread. In contrast to Polus (see, e.g., 469c, addressed to Socrates, σὺ ἄρα τυραννεῖν οὐκ ἂν δέξαιο; ["You mean you wouldn't welcome being tyrant?"]), Callicles is careful not to speak in terms of tyranny, instead using vocabulary more acceptable to his interlocutors, that of masters and slaves (484a) and that of military conquest (483d–e, referring specifically to Xerxes' and Darius's attempts to conquer Greece and Scythia, among "countless others" that one could mention). That it is considered "natural" to want more is underlined in Glaucon's introduction to the story of the ring of Gyges by the way he says that "everyone, by natural disposition, aspires to acquisitiveness as a good thing" (Pl. *Resp.* 359c πλεονεξίαν, ὃ πᾶσα φύσις διώκειν πέφυκεν ὡς ἀγαθόν). According to Weber 1967: 5, πλεονεξία and related words occur first in Hdt., interestingly, applied only to Greeks (7.149.3, 7.158.1, 8.112.1).

⁶⁰ MacDowell 1971: 180 (on *Vesp.* 345); Roisman 2006: 66–68.

⁶¹ Just before, the chorus had called Bdelycleon a "long-haired Amyntias" (Κομηταμυνία, 466) and they will shortly condemn him for "letting his facial hair go untrimmed" (τὴν ... ὑπὴν ἄκουρον τρέφων, 477), all marks characteristic of Spartan sympathizers (Millis 1997) and, supposedly, therefore of those who lust after tyranny. When Herodotus describes the Athenian Cylon as lusting after the tyranny he says that he "grew his hair long, aiming at tyranny" (5.71.1 ἐπὶ τυραννίδι ἐκόμησε); Hornblower ad loc. (2013: 211) refers to Leitaio 2003: 119 for the association of adolescent hair-growing and "sexuality and physical vitality more generally."

⁶² Seager 1967; Munn 2006: 319–24.

object of Alcibiades' lust could not be spoken of by name in polite society, the intensity of his ambition was known to all. Socrates is therefore portrayed as saying that it is renown that Alcibiades lusts after to an unparalleled degree, calling him a "lover of the people."⁶³ Like Alcibiades, Calicles is similarly presented as politically ambitious, and his desire for political power is also expressed in erotic terms.⁶⁴ Not surprisingly, in Plato's dialogue on *eros*, we find *philotimia* spoken of by Diotima as lusting after renown.⁶⁵ In Euripides' *Medea* Jason's ambition takes the form of *eros* directed at the daughter of the Corinthian king (694–98), but Medea makes clear to Aegeus the true object of her husband's lust, as is well brought out by Judith Mossman's translation: "He fell in love with making a marriage tie with royalty" (700 ἀνδρῶν τυράννων κῆδος ἡράσθη λαβεῖν). The Persian Araspas (Xen. *Cyr.* 5.1.14) cannot very well include tyrannical power in the list of the objects of men's desires, since he is engaged in conversation with Cyrus, so he tactfully restricts himself to mentioning wealth, fine horses (this is Xenophon, after all) and beautiful women.⁶⁶

⁶³ Pl. *Alc.* I 124b τοῦ ὀνομαστὸς γενέσθαι ... οὐ μοι δοκεῖς ἐρᾶν ὡς οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἄλλου ("of becoming famous ... which you seem to me to crave as no one else craves anything else"), 132a δημεραστής. Denyer 2001: 226, on the latter passage, compares *Grg.* 481d–e and *Ar. Eq.* 710–1408 (where "[t]he conceit is elaborated at length"), and says that the word, which may have been coined by the author of the dialogue, "indicates someone who has for the favours that the people can bestow a passion akin to that of an older man for the sexual favours of a beautiful youth." See also Yatromanolakis 2005, who, however, fails to distinguish between the conceit we are concerned with and the longing that is felt by someone who is separated from family and homeland. Brock 2013: 115–16 sees the image of the politician as lover of the *demos* as originating with Pericles' funeral oration (Thuc. 2.43.1 τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἐραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς ["daily observing the power of the city in action and becoming lovers of it"]), but love of one's homeland (Eur. *Phoen.* 359, fr. 729; *Ar. Av.* 1279) should be distinguished from currying favor with the *demos* in order to secure political influence.

⁶⁴ Pl. *Grg.* 513b ἐπιθυμεῖς πολιτικὸς εἶναι ("you desire to become involved in politics") and 513c ὁ δῆμου ... ἔρωσ ("your love of the people"); in the latter case Socrates is teasing Calicles as being the *erastes* not only of the people but of Demos, son of Pyrilampes (see 481d, 513b).

⁶⁵ Pl. *Symp.* 208c δεινῶς διάκεινται [sc. οἱ ἄνθρωποι] ἔρωτι τοῦ ὀνομαστοῖ γενέσθαι ("men are acutely afflicted by a passion for becoming famous").

⁶⁶ For fine horses as objects of men's lust, compare [Eur.] *Rhes.*, where Hector and Dolon rival each other in their desire to possess Achilles' horses: 184 καὶ μὴν ἐρῶντί γ' ἀντερᾶς ἵππων ἐμοί ("your passion to possess the horses equals my own passion"), 839 ἵππων ἐρασθεῖς ("overcome by passion for the horses"), 859–60 μή μ' ἔρωσ ἔλοι/ τοιοῦτος ἵππων ("may no such passionate desire for horses possess me").

Erotic terminology is commonly used not only to refer to the desire for power in the political sphere but also to the desire for acquiring possessions and territory, especially by military conquest. In Homer the taking of Troy is spoken of metaphorically in terms of the victors “loosing Troy’s headdress.”⁶⁷ Since the headdress (*kredemnon*) is an exclusively feminine article of clothing and is symbolic of maidenly purity, it seems clear that the capture of the city is thought of as comparable to the forcible ravishment of a woman.⁶⁸ The goddess Nike, the personification of success in warfare and all other types of competition, is represented in the visual arts as winged, and thus difficult of access; by the time of Herodotus she had come to be depicted as sensuously appealing, and thus an enticing object of sexual desire.⁶⁹ And so Herodotus portrays Mardonius as infused with a dire desire to recapture Athens.⁷⁰ Thomas Harrison (above, n43) classifies this as an instance of the “desire to cause gratuitous injury,” but the intensely erotic vocabulary associates Mardonius with others who are driven to conquest by a passion that no more requires explanation than does sexual desire. Croesus, whose desire to attack Greek *poleis* Herodotus felt it unnecessary to explain (1.26–27),

⁶⁷ *Il.* 16.100 ὅφρ’ οἶοι Τροίης ἱερὰ κρήδεμνα λύωμεν (“so that we alone might loose the sacred headdress of Troy”), *Od.* 13.388 οἶον ὅτε Τροίης λύομεν λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα (“like the time when we loosed the glistening headdress of Troy”); see also Bacchyl. fr. 20B.11 S-M πολίων κράδεμνα λύει (“he looses the headdress of cities”), in a context of the symposiast’s fantasies of sexual fulfillment (8), military conquest, absolute political power (12) and wealth (13), with Fearn 2007a: 34–70.

⁶⁸ This is argued at length by Nagler 1974: 44–60, who refers (53) to the “rape” of Troy; see also Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 130–32 and Gottschall 2008, whose sensational title seems to have prevented his revelatory book from attracting the attention of serious Classical scholars. For the nature of the *kredemnon*, see Hoekstra on *Od.* 13.388 (Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989: 187–88); Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 28–36.

⁶⁹ See Neer 2010: 138–41 on the Nike of Paenionius, dedicated in 421, which he describes as “[b]y Greek standards ... almost shockingly erotic” (139) and “highly eroticized yet unattainable” (141).

⁷⁰ 9.3.1 δεινός τις ἐνέστακτο ἥμερος τὰς Ἀθήνας δεύτερα ἐλεῖν (“he was imbued with an acute desire to capture Athens for a second time”); for the fluid nature of erotic desire, see Vox 1992. Flower and Marincola 2002: 105, who mistakenly claim that this is the only occurrence of ἥμερος in Hdt., compare Thuc. 6.24.3 ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσε τοῖς πᾶσιν ὁμοίως ἐκπλεῦσαι (“lust for the expedition assaulted all alike”), of the collective Athenian passion to undertake the conquest of Sicily (see n83); see also Isoc. *Helen* 52 τοσοῦτος δ’ ἔρωσ ἐνέπεσεν τῶν πόνων καὶ τῆς στρατείας ἐκείνης (“so great a lust for that expedition and the exertions involved in it assaulted them”), of the Trojan War. For the near synonymy of ἔρος/ἔρωσ and ἥμερος, see Weiss 1998: 49–50, who distinguishes the two as follows: “ἔρος is desire conceived of as subject-internal in its origin and its end. ἥμερος, on the other hand, is a compulsive desire of external origin” (50).

invaded Cappadocia in part to retaliate against Cyrus and in part simply “from a desire for land, wishing to increase his own territory.”⁷¹ Retaliation or any other ulterior motive is unnecessary. As Mardonius himself explains to Xerxes, encouraging him to retaliate against the Greeks using an argument *a fortiori*, it would be absurd for the Persians not to punish them for their aggression (ἀδικίη) when the Persians had previously overthrown and enslaved the Sacae, the Indians, the Ethiopians, the Assyrians and countless other powerful nations, not because those nations had engaged in aggression against the Persians, but merely “out of a wish for increased power” (7.9.2 δύναμιν προσκτᾶσθαι βουλόμενοι). Mention of the Ethiopians should remind us, and Xerxes, that not all the Ethiopians were subjects of the Persians: Cambyses had failed to conquer the Long-Lived Ethiopians, whose king scolded Cambyses, saying that if he were a just man “he would not covet territory that did not belong to him” (3.21.2 οὐτ’ ἂν ἐπεθύμησε χώρας ἄλλης ἢ τῆς ἑωυτοῦ). Nor is it only individuals who covet territory; whole communities can be subject to such lust for land. The Athenians expelled the Pelasgians from unproductive land in Attica that the Athenians had previously given them and that the Pelasgians rendered productive. The motive ascribed by Hecataeus, according to Herodotus, was the Athenians’ “envy and desire for the land.”⁷² In retaliation for this, the Pelasgians, who were now living on Lemnos, sailed to Athens and abducted a number of Athenian women to serve as their concubines (6.138.1), an action that inevitably recalls the (allegedly) retaliatory abductions of Book One.

Two incidents early in Book Five clearly illustrate the association that is felt between erotic desire and lust for political power and territorial conquest. Two Paeonian brothers, Pigres and Mastyes, use the sexual attractiveness and domestic accomplishments of their sister, “wishing to become tyrants of Paeonia.”⁷³ They parade their beautiful and talented sister before the gaze of

⁷¹ 1.73.1 γῆς ἰμέρῳ προσκτήσασθαι πρὸς τὴν ἑωυτοῦ μοῖραν βουλόμενος. I would propose reading προσκτήσασθαι <τι> (see Thuc. 6.18.2, Xen. Cyr. 4.3.3, Isoc. 6.38), with τι easily having fallen out before π-. προσκτᾶσθαι requires an object and the only one available is μοῖραν, construing πρὸς τὴν ἑωυτοῦ [sc. γῆν] μοῖραν; but when Hdt. uses μοῖρα to mean “territory” it is always qualified.

⁷² 6.137.2 φθόνον τε καὶ ἔμερον τῆς γῆς; for a detailed and sensitive reading of this passage, see Baragwanath 2008: 136–43.

⁷³ 5.12.1 ἐθέλοντες Παιόνων τυραννεῦειν. This incident follows immediately upon the passage referred to above (pp. 17–18), concerning Histiaeus and Coes, regarding the primacy of tyranny among men’s desires, and is introduced as explaining how something that Darius saw aroused his desire (πρῆγμα τοιόνδε ἰδόμενον ἐπιθυμῆσαι) to uproot the Paeonians and move them to Asia (Osborne 2007: 91–92).

Darius in hopes that he will grant them the political power that they crave.⁷⁴ Their ploy comes to naught, however, as Darius asks them if all Paeonian women are similarly accomplished; when they reply in the affirmative, Darius orders Megabazus to displace the Paeonians and lead them to Asia, along with their children and their women (5.14.1). Thus does Herodotus explain the relocation of an entire people as motivated by the sight of a beautiful woman, not in some remote mythical era but in the aftermath of Darius's Scythian campaign (Boedeker 2011: 216, 232). Immediately following this narrative Herodotus gives an account (5.17–20) of the seven Persian emissaries sent to demand earth and water from the Macedonians, an account that again reveals the association between hegemony and sexual lust. After they have been given the earth and water, the Persians are entertained by the Macedonians and they request that the Macedonian women join them following the feast. Although this is contrary to Macedonian custom, the new masters' request cannot be denied and so the women are brought in.⁷⁵ When the Persians catch sight of them they complain that it is distressing to their eyes to have beautiful women seated across from them (5.18.4) and they require that the women be seated next to them, whereupon they begin to molest the women, who are, after all, now their subjects.⁷⁶

These two narratives, occurring in the proem, as it were, to Herodotus's account of the Ionian revolt, underline the connections between erotic desire on the one hand and lust for tyranny and territorial expansion on the other.⁷⁷ Herodotus will surely have been familiar with Aeschylus's *Persae*, in which Darius's widow dreams that Xerxes yoked to his chariot two tall, beautiful, well-dressed women, one of whom rises up against her master and breaks the yoke in two.⁷⁸ The ubiquity in Greek poetry of the metaphors that render

⁷⁴ Hornblower 2013: 104, on 5.12.1 and 2, notes the parallels between the beauty and the adornment of the sister and that of Phye (1.60), who is used by Peisistratus, not to become tyrant, but to be restored as tyrant of Athens; see also Osborne 2007: 92.

⁷⁵ King Amyntas acknowledges that the Persians are now the Macedonians' "masters" (5.18.3 δεσπότες).

⁷⁶ Outraged by the Persians' behavior, Amyntas's son Alexander has young Macedonian men dress as women and, when the Persians try again to molest them, the Macedonians kill them (5.20). For this incident in general, see Fearn 2007b, who sees connections between this narrative and the reference to the abduction of Helen in 1.3.

⁷⁷ For the many "more or less explicit back-references" to Book One found in Books Five and Six, see Hornblower 2013: 4–15. As he notes on 5.12.1, "As often, bk. 5 echoes bk. 1: two beginnings."

⁷⁸ Aesch. *Pers.* 181–99; see Garvie 2009: 116, on 181–83: "The struggle which the dream symbolizes is clearly that which Herodotus too envisages between east and west." For Hdt.'s familiarity with Aeschylus's tragedy, see Saïd 2002: 137.

maidens “fillies” and marriage “taming” and “yoking” inevitably suggests a sexual component to the image.⁷⁹ The two women are differentiated by their clothing, the submissive one dressed in Persian garb, the rebellious one in a Doric peplos, clearly symbolizing the two continents that Xerxes attempted unsuccessfully to yoke permanently with his bridge between the two.⁸⁰ Later in the play, when the shade of Darius reflects on the calamitous results of Xerxes’ attempt at conquest, he admonishes the living Persians on stage, saying, “Let no one disdain the existing dispensation from the gods and, by lusting after other things, forfeit great riches.”⁸¹ Darius’s language, which speaks of acquisitiveness in sexual terms, is paralleled elsewhere. When Pindar says of the mother of Asclepius that she “lusted after what she did not have” (*Pyth.* 3.20 ἤρατο τῶν ἀπεόντων), the context is explicitly sexual, but Pindar universalizes Coronis’s experience with the generalizing plural and with the immediately following observation that “many have had the same sort of experience” (οἷα καὶ πολλοὶ πάθον). Indeed, he will use this as part of his admonition to Hiero to bear with equanimity his share of good fortune (80–84). And, like Darius’s admonition to the Persians in Aeschylus’s play, Pindar’s account of Coronis’s excessive desire is followed by a statement to the effect that behavior which oversteps proper bounds does not escape the notice of the gods.⁸²

⁷⁹E.g., Hom. *Il.* 3.301, 18.432; Anac. 72.1 *PMG*; Pind. *Pyth.* 11.24; Bacchyl. 11.84; Aesch. *Sept.* 454–55, *Supp.* 143=153, 149, fr. 99.6 Radt; Soph. *OT* 826, *Trach.* 536, *El.* 1239, *OC* 1056, 1321; Eur. *Alc.* 994, *Med.* 242, 623, 804, 1366, *Hipp.* 545–49, 1425, *Andr.* 621, *Hec.* 142, *Supp.* 791, 822, *El.* 99, *Tro.* 536, 676, *Bacch.* 468, 694, *IA* 698; Ar. *Thesm.* 1138; Ap. Rhod. 4.1191; Theoc. *Id.* 27.7; T. Köln inv. 2.25 with Martinez 1990.

⁸⁰With 190–92 ἄρμασιν δ’ ὑπο/ ζεύγνυσιν αὐτῶ καὶ λέπαδν’ ὑπ’ αὐχένων/ τίθησι (“[Xerxes] yoked the pair to his chariot and placed the yoke-strap under their necks”), compare 71 ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλὼν αὐχένι πόντου (“placing a yoke around the neck of the sea”), where Xerxes is described in the following line as the “ruler of Asia” and his goal had just been identified as “the neighboring land on the opposite coast” (68 ἀντίπορον γείτονα χώραν), i.e., Europe. See Hdt. 7.33 τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ἐξεύγνυσαν ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην (“[Xerxes’ engineers] yoked the stream of the Hellespont from Asia to Europe”).

⁸¹824–26 μηδέ τις/ ὑπερφρονήσας τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα/ ἄλλων ἐρασθεὶς ὄλβον ἐκχέη μέγαν; see also Eur. fr. 1076 Kannicht πάντων ἄριστον μὴ βιάζεσθαι θεούς, / στέργειν δὲ μοῖραν· τῶν ἀμηχάνων δ’ ἔρω/ πολλοὺς ἔθηκε τοῦ παρόντος ἀμπλακεῖν (“Best of all is to refrain from trying to coerce the gods and instead to acquiesce in fate; lusting after the unattainable has caused many to lose what is at hand”), with Soph. *Ant.* 90 ἀμηχάνων ἐρᾷς (“You lust after the unattainable”).

⁸²Pind. *Pyth.* 3.27 οὐδ’ ἔλαθε σκοπόν (“nor did she escape the notice of the Watcher [i.e., Apollo]”); compare Aesch. *Pers.* 827–28 Ζεὺς τοι κολαστὴς τῶν ὑπερκόμπων ἄγαν/ φρονημάτων ἐπεστίν, εὐθύνοος βαρὺς (“Zeus is established as the scourge of excessively

Sentiments similar to those expressed by Darius and Pindar, and the language used to express those sentiments, are found elsewhere. In the debate over the Sicilian expedition Nicias characterizes those who would vote in favor of the proposed expansionist venture as smitten with “a perilous lust for what they do not have.”⁸³ And in *Against Eratosthenes*, Lysias condemns Theramenes for having reduced his fellow citizens to slavery “by disdaining the present arrangement,” namely the democracy, “and desiring something else,” namely oligarchy.⁸⁴ In Theocritus 10, Milo asks Bucaeus why his reaping has, of late, been below standard, to which the latter replies with a question: “Hasn’t it ever happened to you to long for what you don’t have?” (10.8 οὐδ’ αὖ μοι συνέβη ποθέσαι τινὰ τῶν ἀπεόντων;). Dover 1971: 167 ad loc., referring to line 15, assumes that “Milon takes it for granted ... that it is a girl, not a boy” that is the object of Bucaeus’s longing. But it is not until line 10 that it becomes clear that the passion that is interfering with Bucaeus’s ability to do his job is of a sexual nature, and Gow (1965: 2.195 ad loc.) is undoubtedly right in taking τινὰ τῶν ἀπεόντων as neuter plural, as comparison with the passages we have been considering shows.⁸⁵ That is, when one speaks of *eros* it is not necessarily the case that one is referring to sexual desire. The object of one’s lust may be a man or a woman, for the purpose of gratifying one’s

lofty thinking, a stern chastener”). For the uncertain date of *Pythian* 3, see Currie 2005: 344–45, who says that it was “evidently performed on Sicily” (345); we are told that *Pers.* was performed in Syracuse at Hiero’s invitation (Garvie 2009: liii–lvii), but whether that was before or after 472, when the play was produced in Athens, we do not know (Bosher 2012).

⁸³Thuc. 6.13.1 δυσέρωτας εἶναι τῶν ἀπόντων. Nicias is unsuccessful in dissuading the Athenians; after Alcibiades speaks in favor of the expedition the Athenians become far more enthusiastic for the invasion than before (6.19.1). This prompts Nicias to deliver a second speech, as a result of which the Athenians become still more enthusiastic (6.24.2); in fact, everyone is smitten with a collective lust for the expedition (above, n70; see also Aesch. Ag. 341–42 ἔρωσ δὲ μή τις πρότερον ἐμπίπτῃ στρατῶ/ πορθεῖν ἂ μὴ χρή [“Let no lust beforehand assail the army, lust for plundering what is not proper”], Eur. IA 808–9 δεινὸς ἐμπέπτωκ’ ἔρωσ/ τῇσδε στρατείας Ἑλλάδ’ [“a frightful lust for this expedition assailed the land of Greece”]), where the accusative is supported by Soph. OC 942). For extended treatment of this trope, see Ch. IV, “The Erotics of Empire,” in Wohl 2002: 171–214.

⁸⁴Lysias 12.78 τῶν μὲν παρόντων καταφρονῶν, τῶν δὲ ἀπόντων ἐπιθυμῶν.

⁸⁵Gow notes, further, that the opening dialogue is similar to that between Heracles and Dionysus in Ar. *Ran.* But there it is immediately clear from Dionysus’s initial reference to reading Euripides’ *Andromeda* (53) that his longing is sexual. A better analogue is the dialogue between Phaedra and her nurse in *Hipp.*, where both characters use the language of *eros* (193 δυσέρωτες, 219 ἔραμαι, 225 ἔρασαι, 235 ἔρασαι) well before Phaedra allows her nurse to know the sexual nature of her desires.

erotic passion, but it might just as well be fancy material goods or absolute political power or the military conquest of a neighboring state.

5. A CONCLUDING CASE STUDY: XERXES ERASTES

To return, then, to the series of abductions at the opening of Herodotus's *Histories*, we have seen that Herodotus, and Greeks in general, speak of those motives that we today would consider appropriate objects of the serious historian's attention using the same language found when referring to men's impulse to ravish women. This impulse is felt to be intensely erotic and, as such, is readily understood without needing to be explained or justified. It may be considered immoral and unjust to abduct the wife of Sparta's king or to reduce Ephesus to the status of tributary to the Lydian state, and both acts may provoke a desire for retaliation and revenge, but both acts are understood by the Greeks to proceed from fundamentally the same motive. The abduction of Io, which Herodotus presents without specifying whether the Phoenicians are thought to have been motivated by sexual passion or desire for commercial gain, is the perfect illustration of this seeming equivalence. Men lust after appealing sexual objects, material goods, political and military dominance and they do what they can get away with in order to satisfy that lust.⁸⁶ I am not suggesting that simple lust can be seen as supplying an adequate explanation for complex historical events. That would be reductionist and, as Emily Baragwanath rightly notes, "Herodotus the inquirer into human motivation is never reductionist."⁸⁷ But the kind of desire that the Greek word *eros* can designate is understood to be a universal, unlike, say, the innumerable customs and practices that distinguish one community from another, which Herodotus is so much interested in documenting.

Throughout his work Herodotus explores the variety of ways *eros* is implicated in the causation of historical events. To document that range would

⁸⁶ While Hdt. and his fellow Greeks seem to have regarded male lust as perfectly natural and inevitable, women's desires made them profoundly uncomfortable. Just as women in the private realm are expected to maintain (and not squander) the household's resources, women rulers ideally look after their territory and do not seek to expand it. Like a good housewife, the Babylonian queen Nitocris undertakes public works projects and concerns herself with defending her domain against the expansionism of the Persians (1.185–86) and, even after her death, castigates Darius for his acquisitiveness (1.187; Dillery 1992). And Tomyris, queen of the Massagetae, satisfied with ruling her own territory, admonishes Cyrus to keep to his own (1.206.1 πανσάμενος δὲ βασίλευε τῶν σεωυτοῦ καὶ ἡμέας ἀνέχευ ὀρέων ἄρχοντας τῶν περ ἄρχομεν ["Stop what you are doing; rule over what is your own and endure the sight of me governing my own realm"]).

⁸⁷ Baragwanath 2008: 5. The text of her elegant book firmly supports this statement.

require a lengthy dissertation. Let us instead content ourselves with closing this essay, as Herodotus closes his *Histories*, by examining a single episode, the sordid account of Xerxes' passions, first for his sister-in-law and then for his daughter-in-law (9.108–13), an account that balances the early story of Candaules' obsession with his wife's beauty (1.8.1). Critics have noted significant parallels between these two passages (above, n22). Both men have attained absolute power within their respective realms and ought, therefore, to have satisfied their lust. But desire is apparently inexhaustible. The story of Candaules seems to present that king as having a pathetic need to prove to his second-in-command that he is indeed worthy of wielding such power as to entitle him to possession of the woman he considers by far the most beautiful of all.⁸⁸ Xerxes, on the other hand, has suffered a setback with his defeat in Greece and his expansionist desires have therefore been frustrated. This is the man whose power, as we have seen (above, n49), was felt to rival that of the gods, even that of the king of the gods. He had sought to extend his empire, hoping to rule not only Asia but Europe as well, boasting that “we will render the territory of the Persians coterminous with the very heavens ruled by Zeus.”⁸⁹ His ambition to impose the “yoke of servitude” (7.8γ.3 δούλιον ζυγόν) on the inhabitants of two continents recalls the image frequently employed in Aeschylus's *Persae* (e.g., 50 ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλεῖν δούλιον Ἑλλάδι [“to place the yoke of servitude upon Greece”]), most notably in the account of Atossa's dream (above, pp. 25–26), where Xerxes yokes two women to his chariot. Without referring to Aeschylus, Deborah Boedeker has shown how Herodotus represents Xerxes' proposed invasion as “a masculine pursuit, with those who oppose it playing the role of women.”⁹⁰ The invasion, of course, results in disastrous defeat for Xerxes who, having failed to add Europe to his

⁸⁸ John Dillery has kindly and gently caused me to appreciate the difficulty of seeing the references to *eros* in this account (1.8.1 ὁ Κανδαύλης ἡράσθη τῆς ἑωυτοῦ γυναικός, ἐρασθεὶς δὲ ... [“Candaules was in thrall sexually to his own wife and, being in thrall ...”]) in terms of acquisitiveness, and I am still not sure I understand how lusting after one's own wife fits into the pattern established elsewhere. In any event, I find attractive Carolyn Dewald's attempt (1981: 107–9) to show that Candaules' passion, like that of Xerxes, brings him into conflict with propriety and custom, which need to be preserved and protected by the women in the stories.

⁸⁹ 7.8γ.1 γῆν τὴν Περσίδα ἀποδέξομεν τῷ Διὶ αἰθέρι ὁμουρέουσιν.

⁹⁰ Boedeker 2011: 219 (Artabanus had spoken against the proposal; to punish him for his cowardice Xerxes angrily orders him to remain behind with the women: 7.11.1). Boedeker further notes that Europe “is subtly characterized as feminine, not only by the gender of the name *Europa* (to which Herodotus has called attention at 4.45.2), but also by Mardonius' description of its remarkable beauty and fertility (7.5.3).”

empire, thereby failing to equal the gods in power, is relegated to the status of a mere human, confined to satisfying his lust by appropriating other men's women. And, like his pursuit of worldwide empire, his erotic escapades are characterized by small success and major failure. For Xerxes at least had the satisfaction of seeing his troops take and plunder the acropolis of Athens, entering by way of the sanctuary dedicated to the maiden Aglauros (8.53), but his dream of annexing Europe came to grief in the strait of Salamis and on the plain near Plataea.

The final *logos* involving Xerxes begins immediately after a reference to the Persian defeat at Salamis, and it begins and ends by calling attention to his *eros*.⁹¹ Xerxes is overcome with desire for the wife of Masistes but, when he cannot have his way with her, he gives his son in marriage to the daughter of Masistes and his wife, hoping by devious means to secure her compliance. But the daughter, Artaynte, proves even more appealing than the mother; Xerxes drops the mother, falls in love with Artaynte and is finally successful in satisfying his lust (9.108.2). In return for services rendered (9.109.2), Xerxes allows Artaynte to ask for whatever she wants, assuring her that her wish will be granted. We are reminded of Darius, who had offered Coes and Histiaeus their choice of rewards for the services they had rendered him (above, pp. 17–18). Being ambitious men, they requested tyranny and land on which to found a polis, and their requests were easily fulfilled. But tyranny and territory are not the kinds of things that interest Artaynte. Instead, she asks for the beautiful robe that Xerxes' wife had made for him. Xerxes, afraid that his wife will find out about his adultery with his new daughter-in-law, tells her to ask for anything but the cloak, and he offers her cities, limitless gold and sole command of an army.⁹² We have seen all this before. Like the goddesses who seek to influence Paris's vote, the Persian king has the capacity to offer political power and military might; like his predecessor Darius, who offered

⁹¹ The account of the Persian retreat from Mycale ends by telling us that the Persians arrived at Sardis, where Xerxes had been "since his own arrival there from Athens in flight after the naval disaster" at Salamis (9.107.3 ἐπεῖτε ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν προσπταίσας τῇ ναυμαχίῃ φυγῶν ἀπῖκετο), and the next section starts with the bare statement that "while Xerxes was in Sardis he fell in love with the wife of Masistes," his brother (9.108.1 τότε δὴ ἐν τῇσι Σάρδισι ἑὼν ἦρα τῆς Μασίστew γυναικός; see the conclusion of the *logos*, 9.113.2 κατὰ μὲν τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν Ξέρξew ... τοσαῦτα ἐγένετο ["This is what happened concerning the *eros* of Xerxes"]).

⁹² 9.109.3 πόλις τε ἐδίδου καὶ χρυσὸν ἄπλετον καὶ στρατόν, τοῦ ἔμελλε οὐδεὶς ἄρξειν ἄλλ' ἢ ἐκείνη. Shortly before (9.107.3), Xerxes had demonstrated his capacity for granting such boons by conferring on Xenagoras rule over Cilicia as a reward for saving the life of Masistes, Artaynte's father.

Syloson limitless gold and silver in return for an earlier benefaction (also involving a beautiful garment; above, p. 18), Xerxes can confer great wealth on whomever he wishes. Syloson turned down the riches, preferring to ask for tyranny instead. But Artaynte does not crave the things that men find most desirable, and she insists on being given the cloak, which she revels in wearing.⁹³ As Xerxes had feared, Artaynte's possession of the cloak and her flaunting of it come to the attention of his wife.⁹⁴ She waits until the annual banquet that celebrates the king's birthday, at which time custom requires that the king grant any requests, and she asks to be given power over Artaynte's mother, whom she intends to punish for Artaynte's sexual trespass. Under the compulsion of *nomos* (9.111.1), Xerxes complies with his wife's wish by nodding his head in assent, recalling, as Griffith 2011 points out, the gesture of Zeus granting the wish of his paramour Semele. As a result, Artaynte's mother, the wife of Masistes, who is wholly innocent and who commands the affection and loyalty of her husband (9.111.3), is horribly mutilated and Masistes, who attempts to raise a revolt against Xerxes, is killed along with his sons (9.113.2). As was foreordained, Artaynte and her entire family are destroyed.⁹⁵

The story is complex and involved, but at its core, as Herodotus himself emphasizes at both beginning and end, is *eros*. Xerxes is able to satisfy his lust in the case of Artaynte, but that satisfaction comes at a cost. Her mother, on the other hand, is able to resist Xerxes' advances and is confident that

⁹³ 109.3 περιχαρῆς ἐοῦσα τῷ δώρῳ ἐφόρεέ τε καὶ ἀγάλλετο ("she was overjoyed at the gift and she reveled in wearing it"); compare the woman in Atossa's dream dressed in beautiful Persian garb (Aesch. *Pers.* 192 τῇδ' ἐπυργούτο στολῇ ["she prided herself in her outfit"]). Herodotus is silent on the question of whether Artaynte prefers the cloak because she considers it to be a symbol of her power over the most powerful man in the world or because, being a woman—like Io and the other Argive women who throng around the Phoenician ship shopping for fancy imported goods?—she has no higher ambitions.

⁹⁴ Through the simplicity and directness with which Hdt. expresses this (9.110.1 καὶ ἡ Ἀμειστρίς πυνθάνεται μιν ἔχουσιν ["And Amestris noticed her wearing it."]) he replays the decisive moment in the story of Gyges and Candaules' wife (1.10.2 καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἐπορεύετο μιν ἐξιώντα ["And his wife saw him going out"]). For parallels between the two *logoi*, see n22. Compare also 1.8.3 δέσποτα, τίνα λέγεις λόγον οὐκ ὑγιέα ("My lord, what is this improper thing you are saying?"), spoken by Gyges, with 9.111.3 δέσποτα, τίνα μοι λόγον λέγεις ἄχρηστον ("My lord, what is this inhumane thing you are saying to me?"), spoken by Masistes.

⁹⁵ 9.109.2 τῇ δὲ κακῶς γὰρ ἔδεε πανοικίῃ γενέσθαι ("for she, along with her entire household, was bound to come to a bad end"); see 1.8.2 χρὴν γὰρ Κανδαύλῃ γενέσθαι κακῶς ("for Candaules was destined to come to a bad end"), another of the recollections of the Gyges–Candaules *logos*.

Xerxes will not force himself on her because of his respect for her husband, his own brother (9.108.1). Xerxes is unable to prevent the destruction of Artaynte's mother, being constrained by custom, which he is reluctant to violate. Thus, the picture of the monarch that Otanes had painted in the debate on constitutions, of the absolute ruler violating ancestral customs and forcing women to submit to his lust, turns out to be oversimplified.⁹⁶ There are many forces that prevent even the Great King from living a life of unconstrained self-gratification, including the inscrutable workings of the divine, the potential for revenge exacted by injured parties and, king of all (3.38.4), human law and custom. We have come a long way from the smash-and-grab abductions recounted in 1.1–5, but the impulse is the same, the desire to gratify one's desire for sexual pleasure, wealth and power. The factors that can frustrate the pursuit of that gratification are many and varied, and even when the pursuit is successful the danger of retaliation exists. We see how this unfolds in Herodotus's story of Xerxes' sexual pursuits, but this is only a small-scale sample of the way in which *eros* operates, on a much larger scale, in the complex account of the conflicts between Europe and Asia that form the primary subject of Herodotus's *Histories*.

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⁹⁶ 3.80.5 νόμαιά τε κινέει πάτρια καὶ βιάται γυναῖκας ("he undermines ancestral custom and he violates women"). Note that Darius ends his speech in favor of retaining monarchy by urging his fellow conspirators "not to overturn ancestral custom" (3.82.5 πατρίους νόμους μὴ λύειν).

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